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A CASE STUDY OF SEELEY LAKE SCHOOL BUS ROUTE

by

GRACE ELIZABETH REDDING SEELEY

B. A. Montana State University, 1960

**Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

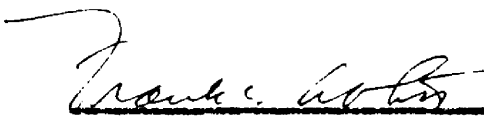
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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Introduction	1
II. Physical Description and Industry	8
III. Socio-economic Continuum	15
IV. Description of School Bus Route	29
V. Problems of School Bus Riders	45
Regularity of Schedule	45
Rest on the Bus	46
Clothing	46
VI. Family and Student Adjustment	51
Morning Schedule	52
Rising Hour in the Morning	52
Adjusted meal hours	53
Supper hour	57
Bedtime hour	57
Help around the house	59
Social control	60
Community recreation	62
VII. Extra-curricular Activities	65
Clubs in High School	70
School Dances and Dating	72
Athletics	73
Band and Drama	77

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII. School Situation	78
Teacher assistance	79
Reference work and library books	81
Grades	82
Drop outs	83
IX. Health and disposition of students	90
Weariness	90
Advantages and disadvantages of a School bus	
route	93
Summary and Conclusions	97
Summary	98
Conclusions	106
Bibliography	108

LIST OF MAPS

MAP	PAGE
I. Location of families in the study	18
II. Missoula County showing location of Seeley Lake, Greenough and McNamara	32
III. Route of the school bus within the city of Missoula	33

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Front view of "old" building of Missoula County High School on Higgins Avenue in Missoula, Montana, 1960	35
2. Front view of the South Avenue building of the Missoula County High School, 1960	35
3. View of the road to Seeley Lake. Steep embankment and narrow shoulders, river below, 1960	38
4. View on road No. 66 to Seeley Lake	38
5. Hill from which rocks rolled in wet weather, also curve which goes to left, narrow shoulders bordering on Salmon Lake, 1960	39
6. Long grade with Salmon Lake visible at the bottom of grade, 1960	40
7. Highway No. 20 bordering on Blackfoot River, 1960	42
8. Narrow shoulders on road in McNamara area, 1961	43

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken to learn the effects of riding a school bus on both the students and their families. The writer became interested in this study when the school bus from Seeley Lake, Montana, delivered students to Missoula County High School during one of the worst blizzards of the Fall of 1959. This school bus route was 76.6 miles long over mountain roads. Other school buses carrying students over much shorter routes to the same high school did not run that day .

Questions about problems of the long haul and the adjustment both the students and their families make to meet these problems kept recurring to the writer. In 1960 the writer made several trips to Seeley Lake townsite and to the surrounding area which lie in mountain country. An effort was made to interview the students who had ridden the bus during the year 1959-1960 and their families in order to ascertain whether some of the problems which sociologists claim for rural families whose children attend consolidated schools actually were present. The writer was interested in how both the students and their families felt about the adjustments they must make in meeting the demands of the school bus schedule and whether there was anxiety about the physical risk taken in traveling mountain roads during winter months.

The following questions were used to focalize the writer's interest in the Seeley Lake students:

- (1) What problems would conditions of the road during the school year present? Do these conditions cause anxiety for the parents and present problems for the student? What about physical comforts on such a long ride?
- (2) What family adjustment is made concerning meal-time, rising and bedtime hours? What responsibility does the family expect of the student concerning help around the home? How much social control is exerted by the family when the student is absent for so many hours? If there is a shift of social control, does the family resent this?
- (3) What degree of participation does the student have in extracurricular activities of the school when he rides a school bus over such a "long haul"? How do parents feel about this degree of participation?
- (4) Does the student benefit from the larger school? Are grades maintained at the same level as when he attended the rural school? Do dropouts occur and is this considered a problem?
- (5) Does the health of the students cause concern? Is there physical strain in riding so many miles each day? Do the informants feel there are more advantages than disadvantages in living in a rural setting?

Two other communities served by the Seeley Lake school bus were studied and used for comparative purposes. The community of McNamara was 19 miles from Missoula County High School. The Fact-Finding Committee of the Seeley Lake Parent Teacher Association recommended that students from the community of Greenough be bused to Seeley Lake if and when a high school would be established at

Seeley Lake. Therefore, Greenough which was 33 miles from Missoula County High School was included.

The people in these three communities had many of the characteristics attributed to rural people. A useful definition of the rural community is that of Lowry Nelson. He states:

In general, the term community refers to a group of people inhabiting a limited area, who have a sense of belonging together and who through their organized relationships share and carry on activities in pursuit of their common interests. It is a 'locality group' The rural community, as it has come to be defined in the United States, is well characterized by Dwight Sanderson as 'that form of association maintained between the people and their institutions in a local area in which they lived on dispersed farmsteads and in a village which usually forms the center of their common activities'.¹

Obviously this definition applied to farming areas in outlying and sparsely-populated areas. However, the same feeling of belonging together and of carrying on their activities in pursuit of their common interests did apply to the inhabitants of the Seeley Lake area. Instead of farming, that is, the tilling of the soil, the chief source of livelihood for most of the families in this area was the lumber industry. There was some raising of cattle, and the tourist trade with the Summer vacationer and the Fall hunter served as a source of income.

In many ways the rural and the urban communities of the United

¹Lowry Nelson, Rural Sociology (New York: American Book Company, 1955), p. 71.

States are similar. Members of the two sub-cultures use a common language, varied by colloquialisms, may read the same literature, listen to the same radio programs and have many of the same aspirations. One of these aspirations held by working and middle classes of both sub-cultures concerns the education of the children. The members of both sub-cultures strive to provide at least a high school education for their youth.

Americans stress education for all the children of all the people. Burgess and Locke have the following to say:

The educational system of the United States was originally designed for a rural civilization, to teach children in the grades the 'three R's,' thus giving them the skills necessary for reading, writing and figuring High School and college education was originally designed to equip those for teaching, for law, for medicine and for the ministry.

Today our conception of education has changed. High School training is the privilege of every adolescent. ¹ Its objective is preparation for citizenship.

As the population of the United States became more urban, so did the schools become more urban. More tax money was available for schools in areas of concentrated industry and other tax-burdened units of our society.

The rural school began to be the forgotten source of transmitting American culture. Most educators have felt that

¹Ernest W. Burgess, and Harvey J. Locke, The Family (New York: American Book Company, 1953), pp. 668-9.

the one-room school has little to offer the students. Even the small school with less than a hundred pupils and a few teachers cannot adequately train the youth for modern American society. To the public-at-large the educators have sold the idea that the consolidated school can do everything better and for less money than the small rural school. Lowry Nelson has summarized the advantages of the consolidated school. He says:

By enlarging the size of the student body, consolidation greatly increases the variety and range of social contacts per pupil.¹

Specialized services can be made available in the consolidated school, such as health, vocational guidance, art and music. Extracurricular activities can be more varied and interesting because of the larger number of students.^{2,3}

In the year of 1960 when this study was being made, no one was arguing against these advantages. Especially was this true when a small rural high school was compared with the Missoula County High School where the best of buildings and equipment were in use. The teachers were well prepared and well trained. In many respects Missoula County High School had the characteristics of a consolidated school. However, it was not a consolidated

¹In Chapter 7 it will be shown that this is not necessarily so.

²In Chapter 7 it will be shown that the bus rider cannot take advantage of these opportunities.

³Lowry Nelson, Rural Sociology (New York: American Book Company, 1955) pp. 386-87.

school as the district was county-wide when it was organized. This was a high school district only and had trustees elected throughout the district, not just within the city limits of Missoula.

However, there was another aspect of this situation. Lowry Nelson points out the disadvantages to consolidated schools. These disadvantages are among the problems this study wishes to cover, namely:

Being more distant from the rural home, the child is absent from the family for a longer period during the day.

Because of the necessity of maintaining bus schedules the rural children are denied participation in many of the school activities which come late in the afternoon or evening.¹

Some parents fear the physical and moral risk involved in the transportation of pupils; the bus may be uncomfortably cold.^{2,3}

In 1956 the residents of Seeley Lake banded together in an attempt to solve the problem of educating the young people of the community. At that time a school bus to transport the pupils to Missoula County High School appeared to be the answer. Prior to 1956 the parents had boarded their children in some town where

¹These disadvantages will be discussed in Chapter 7.

²Seeley Lake winters come early; snowpacked roads, unplowed after a heavy snowfall and with bad curves were a source of worry. The large logging trucks which made traffic hazardous, worried parents additionally.

³Lowry Nelson, Rural Sociology (New York: American Book Company, 1955), p. 387.

there was a high school. This was an expense which most of the families could not bear. Having the children away from home for months at a time did not appeal to parents or to younger brothers and sisters.

In 1956 the parents obtained the services of a driver for all secondary school children. He also agreed to lease his bus to Missoula County High School beginning in the fall of that year.

Four years of experience in having to adjust to the demands of the school bus schedule were behind the people of Seeley Lake in 1960. They realized they had not solved all their problems. The Parent Teacher Association had created a Fact-Finding Committee to assemble data to be used in influencing the voters of the district to vote for a high school at Seeley Lake. For the writer, this was an unexpected break. These people were anxious to talk, especially to anyone studying the aspects of the school bus route.

To further understand the high school situation at Seeley Lake a discussion of the community and its resources has been included, as well as a discussion of the socio-economic levels of the families whose children rode the school bus.

CHAPTER II

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION AND INDUSTRY

Seeley Lake, Montana, as defined in Chapter I, was a rural Community whose high school students were transported more than 76.6 miles to Missoula City High School every school day. To adequately understand the problems of the adjustments which are made to the demands of the school bus schedule by the students who rode the school bus and by their parents, something must be known about the communities, their locations, their industries and their people. This chapter will be devoted to acquainting the reader with the Seeley Lake community and the two communities, Greenough and McNamara, used for comparative purposes.

Seeley Lake is a small rural community located on the eastern side of Missoula County in western Montana. It is situated on the eastern slope of the Swan mountain range, 65 miles from the city limits of Missoula. Seeley Lake community lies in the heart of a lumber and recreation area. The townsite is on the shore of Seeley Lake, one of a series of lakes on the Clearwater River. On the mountain slopes harvestable forests and wild game are abundant, both contributing to the material wealth of the community.

The land around Seeley Lake was not opened to homesteaders

as much of Montana's prairie lands were. The federal and state governments have retained control of much of the land. Large companies such as the Northern Pacific Railway and the Anaconda Copper Mining Company have acquired forest lands in this area. A few persons bought small holdings in this area in the past; then the Government closed this land to private purchase. Many summer homes have been built around the lakes on leased land. The Government has built a good two-lane, black-topped road through this area to assist the lumber companies in getting out the logs. This road opened up the area for the tourist as well as the fisherman and hunter.

Seeley Lake is hardly more than a "line" village, the highway through the town being the one street. In winter snow is piled high and the activity of the little community is centered around logging and the lumber business. In the summertime and during the hunting season in the fall, the businesses of Seeley Lake are busy serving the visitors as well as the local residents.

In 1960 two general stores supplied necessities and some small luxuries for the locals and necessities for vacationers. When power lines were extended into the area the stores installed refrigeration so that fresh meats and vegetables could be available to the customers. In one end of the larger store was the United States post office. On the bulletin board in the post office were displayed letters without stamps or return addresses, post

cards carrying urgent messages about changes in plans but no address.

In addition to the stores there were two filling stations, two bars with cafes, a garage, a barber shop, a laundromat, two churches and an elementary school. The remains of the stage coach station reminded the visitor that access to the community had not always been over a good road for automobiles.

The year-round important industries of getting out the logs and sawing the lumber are hazardous. Loitering around the townsite were men with bandaged arms, hands and legs; yet there was no doctor or medical center when this study was made.

The forests provided the biggest number of jobs. Most of the men living in the Seeley Lake area worked for one of the two saw mills or in getting out the logs. The two mills employed 250 men. Since the harvest of lumber and wood products was under the careful supervision of the United States Forest Service there was reason for these men to believe that the forest would continue to yield a good harvest and that their jobs were secure.

The following is taken from a letter written by Charles T. Coston, District Ranger, to the Seeley Lake Parent Teacher Association:

In 1939, the Forest Service completed a timber management plan for the Missoula 'Working Circle,' as the area comprised of the Seeley Lake, Missoula, Bonita, Lolo, and Finemile Ranger Districts is called. This management plan, considering maximum utilization of timber contained in national forest timber sales, permits a sustained harvest of 76,000,000 board feet of sawlogs annually, plus 88,900 cords of other usable wood. Trees with a

diameter at breast height of eleven inches are considered cordwood material. From this latter classification comes pulpwood, poles, posts and other products. This arbitrary limitation does not preclude the use of smaller material for saw-log purposes, with millions of board feet of studs, etc., being sawed annually from timber in the smaller diameter class. Of the total allowable cut for the Missoula working circle, the Seeley Lake district provides thirty percent of the cordwood. The allowable cut here is 23,000,000 board feet of sawlogs and 31,600 cords of other material. . . .

To date, practically all the timber cut on the Seeley Lake District has been manufactured right here in our own community. The two local mills are keeping pace with the rest of the Western Montana lumber industry in increasing their output of salable products.¹

Recreation is another big industry in the Seeley Lake area. Especially since the two-lane, black-topped road has been built by the Government, use of the national forest in the Seeley Lake area has increased beyond all expectation. The Forest Service has improved camping sites which, combined with the easy access to the area, have made it possible for persons with limited means to enjoy the luxury of the wilderness. As more leisure time becomes available more and more people will be seeking recreation in the forest.

¹Charles T. Coston, Letter to Parent Teacher Association of Seeley Lake, printed in a pamphlet Why Not a High School at Seeley Lake? Published by the Seeley Lake Parent Teacher Association, 1960.

To show how much the recreational use of the forest has increased, we quote again from the letter written to the Seeley Lake Parent Teacher Association by Mr. Charles T. Coston, District Manager of the Seeley Lake District of the national forest:

Comparison of the past ten years shows that in 1950 as estimated 32,207 man-days were spent in recreational activities within the District boundaries. The rate of use has increased steadily, and the total for 1959 shows 119,900 man-days."¹

Not all persons going into the wilderness areas want to get completely back to nature. Some still want some of the luxuries of home. Some want guides to escort them on pack trips and packers to do the work of setting up and breaking camp. The dude ranchers cater to this type of person. There are several dude ranches in the Seeley Lake area. Some are strictly guest ranches while others have cattle for more than just atmosphere. However, there are ranches which are just cattle ranches.

In this area hay is the only crop. The soil is too rocky for cultivation of crops and the altitude is too high, with frost coming early and staying late, so that even kitchen gardens are not successful.

With the prospect of continued assured employment in the community men brought their families with them into the Seeley Lake Country instead of arriving alone. A community changes in many ways with the arrival of women and children. A man may still be judged

¹Op. Cit.

by his worth on the job or by the amount of beer he can drink but he is also judged by the way his family lives and the advantages given to his children. The socio-economic factor becomes important when the community is two-sexed.

Greenough is a ghost town on highway No. 20 about 33 miles from Missoula. The United States post office has been moved to a store on the highway. The community was established to furnish services for a ranching and mining population in the early days. All of the businesses, including the general store, have closed. The elementary school is still used for an average of nine pupils.

Families living in the community earn their livelihood as ranch helpers or as miners in the barite mine or as workers in the barite mill which is located about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the townsite as the crow flies.

This community possibly owes its present ghost-town condition to the fact that the highway by-passed it. The tavern on highway No. 20 near the barite mill is the home of one of the students in this study.

McNamara is a small community of homes. There are no services, stores or churches. The elementary school is 3 miles away. Most of the men are employed by the Montana Power Company in the operation of getting out logs for power line poles. There were a few families whose income was derived from ranching or pensions at the time this study was being made. McNamara is 19 miles from the South Avenue building of the Missoula County High School.

Missoula County High School is located in the municipality of Missoula which is over 100 years old. This city is located on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains in western Montana. Also, it is located at the crossroads of the East-West and North-South transcontinental United States highways. One of the principal metal producing areas of the United States surrounds Missoula.

The many saw mills and related industries make Missoula an industrial center. The city is in the heart of good farming and ranching area and is the center for the marketing of agricultural produce. It is also the medical and cultural center of the western part of the state. The regional headquarters for the United States and Montana State Forest Service are located there. And, of course, Montana State University is situated in Missoula.

Missoula is the fourth largest city in Montana and is the county seat of Missoula County; it has a population of approximately 41,000 persons. There are pioneer families of wealth and there are families on the other end of the socio-economic scale, with classes of people in all degrees in between the two extremes.

The three communities which were served by the Seeley Lake school bus in 1960 are rural communities although the main source of income is from the forest and forest products rather than from farming. The following chapter will describe the socio-economic continuum of the people whose children rode the school bus when this study was made.

CHAPTER III

SOCIOECONOMIC CONTINUUM

A study of the type of community in which people live helps one to understand their attitudes about education. A study of the socioeconomic continuum on which people are placed on the continuum helps to understand these attitudes, also.

People living in rural areas are not as concerned that their children have a formal education as those who live in urban or suburban areas.

The low value placed on education by the individual or his family as opposed to such competing values as potential labor on the farm or care of younger children results in irregular school attendance and early withdrawal from school.¹

The data of the socioeconomic aspects relates only to those families whose children rode the school bus. The interviewer did not ask questions concerning income or job status due to fear that these inquiries might have prevented the informants from giving true answers to the questions concerning adjustment to the problems presented by the school bus.

Some sociologists use the living room as a basis for placing families on a socioeconomic continuum. Indicators of social

¹Alvin L. Bertrand, Rural Sociology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1958), p. 229.

status used by the writer were the type of house, its vintage and the condition of the yard around the house. Also, the presence of blooded stock was noted. Inside the house floorcovering, furniture and its condition, musical instruments and type of pictures on the wall were taken into consideration in making an evaluation of the material cultural objects. The interviewer tried to learn the amount of education of the parents and the respect the community had for the family. The ease with which the family met the interviewer was noted. As no home in Seeley Lake area had a telephone, this was not considered. Whether the family received a newspaper was not discussed or noted.

Most sociologists assume that the higher the socio-economic status the family holds the more concerned the family is with securing at least a high school education for the children. Only two families in this case study seemed to be indifferent to the education of the children. These two families were low on the continuum. The rest of the families in the Seeley Lake area were united in their efforts to secure the best education without too much sacrifice on the part of the children. They were united in a community effort to secure the school bus for the children and they were united again in community effort to secure a high school for Seeley Lake so that the children would not need to endure the hardships of the long haul.

The writer made the evaluation of the socio-economic status

of each family from observation or from bits of information taken from the interviews with the families in Seeley Lake. The families in the Seeley Lake area are numbered S 1 through S 10.

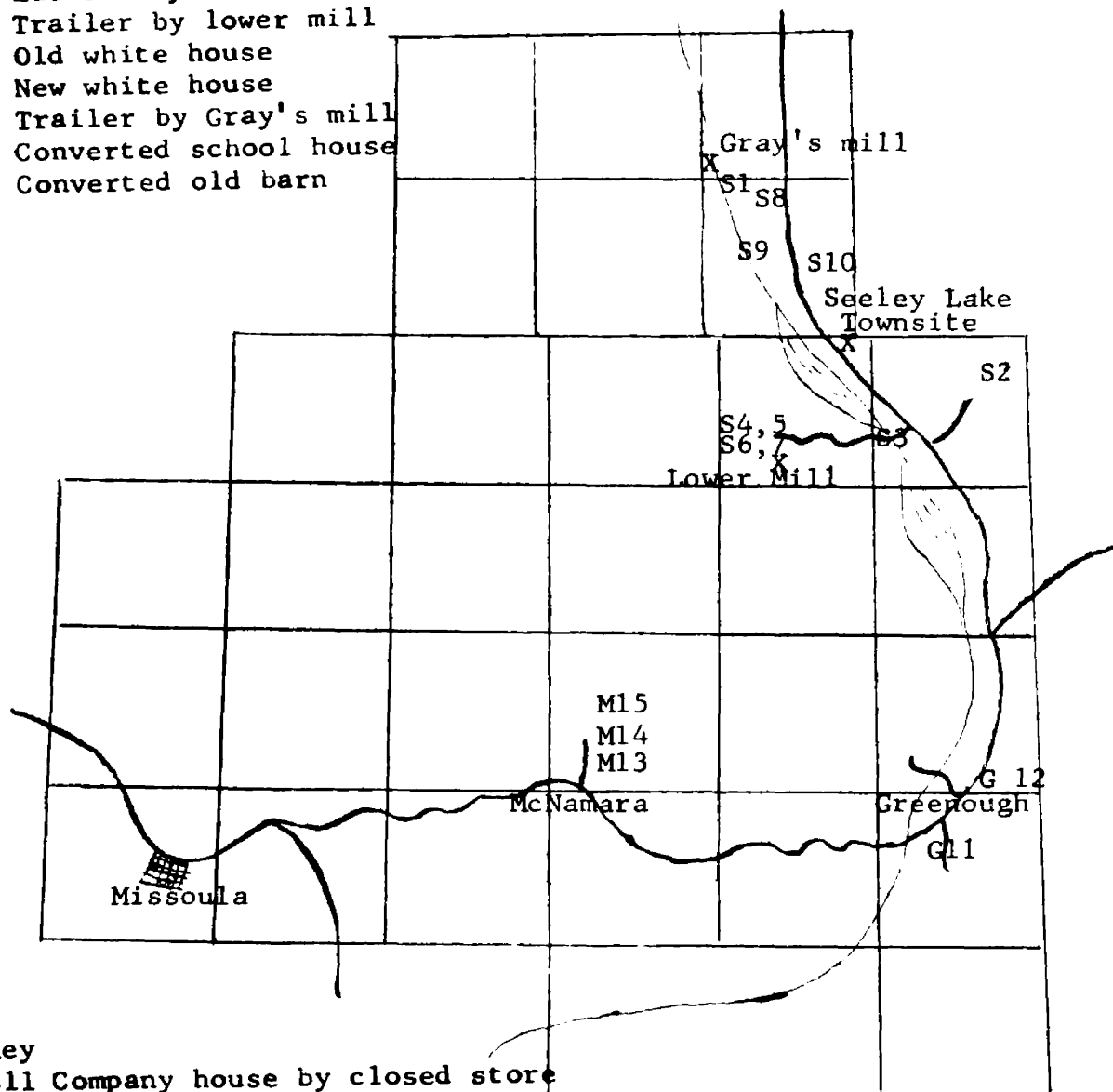
Family No. S 1 was the top family on the continuum. This family lived near the big saw mill eight miles north of Seeley Lake townsite. The family owned its home. The son, who was the student at Missoula County High School, owned and operated a cattle ranch. The family home was new and modern. Wall-to-wall carpeting covered the living room floor. At one side of the long living room was a big picture window. This was the only picture window seen in Seeley Lake by the interviewer. At the far end of the room was a fireplace with fixtures and accessories of brass. All the furniture, including the electric spinet organ and the TV set, was modern, blond in color. Oil paintings were on the walls. Both the father and mother in this family have college degrees. Blooded horses were kept in the home corral; cars were kept in the multiple unit garage. The family members were at ease with the interviewer. The father owned and operated the bigger saw mill. The father, also, was a member of the Missoula County High School Board of Trustees, elected by the Seeley Lake District voters. The community accorded this family the top place on the continuum. The Seeley Lake elementary school had graduated the son at the top of his eighth grade class.

Family No. S 2 was a dude ranch family. This family, too,

Missoula County

Key

- S1 Mill Owner
- S2 Dude Rancher
- S3 Chairman of Fact Finding Committee
- S4 Elementary School teacher
- S5 Trailer by lower mill
- S6 Old white house
- S7 New white house
- S8 Trailer by Gray's mill
- S9 Converted school house
- S10 Converted old barn



Key

- G11 Company house by closed store
- G12 Tavern near Greenough
- M13 House on highway No. 20
- M14 First house up the hill
- M15 Shack up the hill

Location of families in the study

Map I

owned its home, a typical dude ranch "spread." The main lodge was built of logs. Individual guest cabins surrounded the oval in front of the main lodge. The main room of the lodge, or the lobby as some called this room, was very large. At one end of this room was an immense fireplace in which a fire was crackling the night that the interviewer called, for the night was cold although it was still in the month of August. The fireplace was built with native stones, not imported bricks. This room was furnished with big lounges, davenports and chairs in the manner of dude ranches of this area. Many lamps, both of the floor and table type, were placed around the room. Bear and buffalo skins as well as hand-made Navajo rugs were spread on the floor. Oil paintings and stuffed animal heads decorated the walls. The father and daughter were at ease with the interviewer. The father, a high school graduate, was a genial host. The mother was absent.

The community accorded this family the position of "social event" leaders within the area. Many community parties were held here, with dancing in the large dining room and games played in smaller rooms; before the grand fireplace the "oldsters" sat as they waited to take the younger members of the family home. The daughter was salutatorian of her eighth grade graduating class. The father was a member of the Fact-Finding Committee appointed by the Parent Teacher Association to study the facts concerning a high school in Seeley Lake.

The third important family in the community was family No. S 3. In directing the interviewer to this home, the neighbors said, "They live in the big white house down the road." The mother of this family was chairman of the P.T.A. Fact-Finding Committee which was promoting a High School for Seeley Lake. This mother had graduated from a small high school in the western part of the state. She worked in the post office.

The father was a mill worker. The "big white house" was a two-story house with three rooms downstairs. There were no rugs on the floor and the furniture was old and battered. This was explained as being the result of having moved to California and back. The upright piano was of the style and size favored by the first families at the turn of the century. Whether the house was owned by this family or rented was not learned. The lawn in front of the house was nicely kept with flower beds. This family, too, was at ease with the interviewer.

South of Seeley Lake townsite and near the "lower" saw mill was a community where workers lived on county road No. 69 and was about a mile off the main highway into Seeley Lake. The driver of the school bus lived here as did the students who were the first to board the school bus in the morning and the last to leave it at night. Within this community there seemed to be no difference in the socio-economic status of the families and yet there was considerable difference in the type and condition of the homes.

In the general community these families were middle class families.

In a typical "company house," red clapboarded and square, lived family No. S 4. The mother was a teacher in the Seeley Lake Elementary School. The father worked in the "lower" mill. This house provided the bare necessities and not much more. The floor of the one main room was covered with linoleum. There was a table of the type used in kitchens about 1900. Two straight back chairs and an electric refrigerator completed the furniture in this room. From this room doors opened into three lean-to bedrooms. The two daughters who were students at Missoula County High School and the father were shy and were not at ease with the interviewer.

Later, when the mother was interviewed, the feeling was more informal. This mother met people easily and was ready to talk about the school situation. As will be shown later in the study, this mother was active in helping the young people socially. The yard around this house was not kept up; due to the constant shade from the tall pines, no grass was growing here.

In a trailer, with a built-on lean-to, lived family No. S 5. The trailer was approximately 10 by 40 feet. The foundation had been banked against the winter winds. At one end of the trailer was a dining area. The rest of the space seemed to be taken up by bunks. This was a large family, and they needed much sleeping space. In the lean-to was an old-fashioned wood-burning stove and a kitchen cabinet of the type sold by Sears Roebuck around 1910.

A table, on which were pails of water, stood near the outside door. Water had to be carried in, waste water out. The oldest boy in the family had finished high school although he had not ridden the bus the full four years. This point will be discussed later in the study. The youngest children in this family did not go to school in 1960. The father, a mill worker, was one of those who was instrumental in getting the school bus for Seeley Lake in the first place. This family, even the little ones, met people easily.

Another family, No. 6, living in this small community had a two-story white house of the design used in eastern communities in the "nineties." The entry to the house was through the kitchen in which children were playing the day the writer called. The kitchen was in a state of confusion. Half of an eight layer chocolate cake was on the table. Wall-to-wall carpeting was on the living room floor. The furniture was in good condition. An electric Hammond spinet organ and a hi-fi set were in the living room. This family owned a parakeet, the only one the interviewer saw in Seeley Lake. The lawn was well kept; a water sprinkler was working. There were flower beds in the lawn. A white picket fence surrounded the lawn. This family was interested in the education of the children. These children met the interviewer easily. The tape recorder which was being used did not bother the youngsters in the family, but the mother reacted negatively to it.

The fourth family, No. S 7, who lived in the little community near the "lower" mill had a new white cottage. The appliances in the kitchen end of the one long room were modern. The floor was tiled. The furniture in the living room end was modern. This mother was very shy and ill at ease.

In a trailer, near Gray's mill, eight miles north of Seeley Lake townsite, lived family No. S 8. This trailer was more expensive than the one south of Seeley Lake and also more modern, having a TV set. Yet, this family did not seem to be as eager to be a part of the community effort as the others, those living in the trailer by the "lower" mill, to secure a high school for Seeley Lake. The father and mother both worked at Gray's mill. The father was a quiet man, but the mother was easy to talk with.

The families at the bottom of the continuum lived between Gray's mill and the Seeley Lake townsite. Family No. S 9 lived in an old grade school house which had been converted into a residence. The partition between the school rooms had been removed. At one end of the long room was a wood-burning cook stove and a table. There was no sign of a cupboard or dishes. There were no chairs in sight, either. At the other end of the room were six double beds, all well made. The children were in "stairsteps," the oldest being a girl about seventeen and the youngest, a baby four months old. The parents were not at home. The oldest daughter was a waitress. In 1960 she was working in a cafe in Seeley Lake area,

but she was planning to move to San Diego as soon as snow came.

Family No. S 10 lived in an old barn. The entrance was through a lean-to which could have been the grain bin when the place housed horses. Now it was the kitchen in which was a wood-burning stove of the turn-of-the-century vintage. The table in the entrance was covered with half-full jars of peanut butter, mustard, catsup bottle, and a smeary butter dish. Dirty dishes and dirty knives covered the table. Near the door, inside the main room, stood a round table on which was a chenille cover of the type which can be purchased at county fairs for a dollar. A kerosene-burning lamp stood in the middle of the table. Under the window, lay a woman on an army cot. She did not move during the interview. In the far part of the room was another cook stove on which stood an old fashioned clothes boiler. A clothesline, loaded with clothes, was stretched from one end of the room to the other. Under the clothes line were four full size beds, neatly made and covered with patchwork quilts. There were three straight back chairs and a rocker near the table with the lamp. At this table three teenage children were playing canasta. The children appeared to be undernourished. One of the girls had a rag tied around her throat. Her teeth needed dental work. During the interview it was learned that she belonged to family No. S 9, that lived in the old school house, across the highway.

The only telephones to receive incoming calls were in the larger grocery store and in one of the bars; outgoing calls could

also be made from a booth along the highway.

Greenough is almost a ghost community about 2 miles off the main highway No. 20. The post office had been moved to a store on the main highway about four miles from the old Greenough community where the defunct general store was located, and where the one-room school house was still in use in 1960. Many vacant houses stood near the school house. Two families in the Greenough area had students riding the school bus. These families are numbered G 11 and G 12.

Near the school house family No. G 11 lived in a "company" house. The family had a TV set and wall-to-wall carpeting. The furniture was in good condition. The part of the kitchen which was seen from the living room was modern with a large refrigerator and late model sink. There was a telephone. The mother was very hospitable and friendly. The father was a barite-mill worker. The barite-mill was near the tavern which is 33 miles from Missoula City limits.

Family No. G 12 lived behind this tavern. The interviewer did not get into the home because the mother was working in the flower beds in front of the tavern. The mother was dressed in a clean, almost new, housedress. There were palomino horses in the corral near the tavern. The mother appeared to be self-conscious about the tavern. She explained that she worked there only when her husband was away. Neighbors said that the husband worked at the barite-mill during the day and tended the bar at night.

The community of McNamara was 19 miles from the South Avenue building of the Missoula County High School where the students attended classes. The men in this community worked for the Montana Power Company and lived in houses owned by the company.

The McNamara families have the numbers M 13, M 14, and M 15. Family No. M 13 lived in the typical "company" house, close by the main highway, Montana No. 20. This was a brown clapboard house. The interviewer was invited into the kitchen. The stove was a modern, white enamel, wood-burning stove. Cupboards were built-in, and there was a zinc type sink. The floor was covered with worn linoleum. Beyond the kitchen, the living room floor was covered by a hand-braided rug. The furniture was in fair condition. A TV set was mentioned, but it was not seen by the interviewer. The kitchen table had signs of a coffee klatsch. The lawn near the house was not kept up. The yard was cluttered with toys and pieces of lumber. The father in this family was a logger for the Montana Power Company. The mother met people well.

Up the hill and out of sight of people on the road lived family No. M 14. This house was small. There was a radio but no TV set. The floor was covered with linoleum. The furniture was plain. In one corner of the living room stood a china closet, which reminded one of the furniture prevalent during the early part of this century. The cupboard was full of pieces of china and glassware. A clock of that same period was on top of the china closet. These

furnishings may have been inherited. In one corner of the room was a cot which was piled high with clean baby clothes which the mother had been folding. This house was one of the cleanest the interviewer was in. Outside the door was a homemade bird-feeder. There were flowers planted outside the door. A fence enclosed the front yard.

A four-month old baby and a teenage boy appeared to be the only children in the family. This mother appeared too young to be the mother of a teenager. She was shy and very soft spoken. This father, too, was a logger.

Farther up the hill was a shack-like place. Here lived family No. M 15. The father was retired. The two boys, who were attending Missoula County High School, were the youngest members of a large family. The front porch was full of junk. Lines strung across the porch were covered with newspapers. The place did not look as though anyone lived there. Access was gained through the back entry way. Muddy boots and old coats were piled in the entry way. A very old, rusty, wood-burning cook stove with a box in the warming oven stood in one corner of the kitchen. Baby chicks were in the box. A table work bench was under the west window, and on the north wall was a counter with a sink. On the counter were pails of water which, it was learned, had been brought from the creek nearby. A cupboard had been erected above the counter. The kitchen table was small, and there were two straight chairs.

An old fashioned hand-operated washing machine stood in the middle of the floor. There were two wash-tubs with a hand wringer between them. The floor was covered by very worn linoleum. Beyond a curtained doorway was a bedroom. The bureau was littered with many things. The little old woman made no apologies for the looks of the place; except to say that she had just finished a two-weeks' washing. There were a chicken coop and yard and a cow barn not far from the house. There was no telephone in this house.

The families had different positions on the socio-economic continuum, but they impressed the writer with one common characteristic. They all wanted a good education for their children except two families, Nos. S 9 and S 10 in Seeley Lake.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL BUS ROUTE

In conjunction with an examination of the physical, industrial, and socio-economic aspects of the Seeley Lake community, the 153.2 miles travelled everyday by the students should be visualized. In this chapter the bus route, the road, the bus, and the busdriver will be discussed. The anxieties of the parents will be noted with regard to road conditions, hours of travel, and pertinent factors of hardship and deprivation.

Lowry Nelson has noted that parents fear the physical risks involved in the transportation of pupils. This was mentioned in Chapter I. Parents in Seeley Lake frequently expressed this fear. From the discussion of the road and the route of the bus the reader will become aware that the trip from Seeley Lake to Missoula County High School was not just a long ride of 76.6 miles each way but a trip which presented numerous problems for the riders and the driver of the bus.

The Seeley Lake school bus route is reputed to be the longest school bus route in the United States. The people in Seeley Lake firmly believed that it was the longest route. With their strong desire for a high school at Seeley Lake existed an intensive feeling that the distance was much too long for children to ride every day.

Whether the route was the longest or not, it did present problems. The following description of the route which the school bus traveled every school day will try to show the features of the route which caused anxiety to parents. Worry and deep concern about the bus and the children on it is one of the facets of this study.

The contract to operate the school bus from Seeley Lake to Missoula County High School went to the lowest bidder. Each bidder was required to have a license to drive a school bus and to be financially able to own his own bus. The people of Seeley Lake felt that they were fortunate to have Mr. MacCormick as driver of the bus. They had full confidence in his ability as a driver and his trustworthiness as a person. During the five years he had been driving the bus previous to the time of this study, Mr. MacCormick had purchased three buses; the last one had reclining seats, enabling the children to rest as much as possible while on the bus.

There were some contingencies of the route over which even an excellent driver with a bus in good condition would have no control. The weather could not be controlled. Winter came early in the Seeley Lake country. The snow-fall was heavier in the mountains than in the lower altitudes. The temperature fell lower and stayed down longer than in the lower valleys. There were mornings when the temperature went lower than 30 degrees below zero.

Parents complained that snow on the road to Clearwater Junction

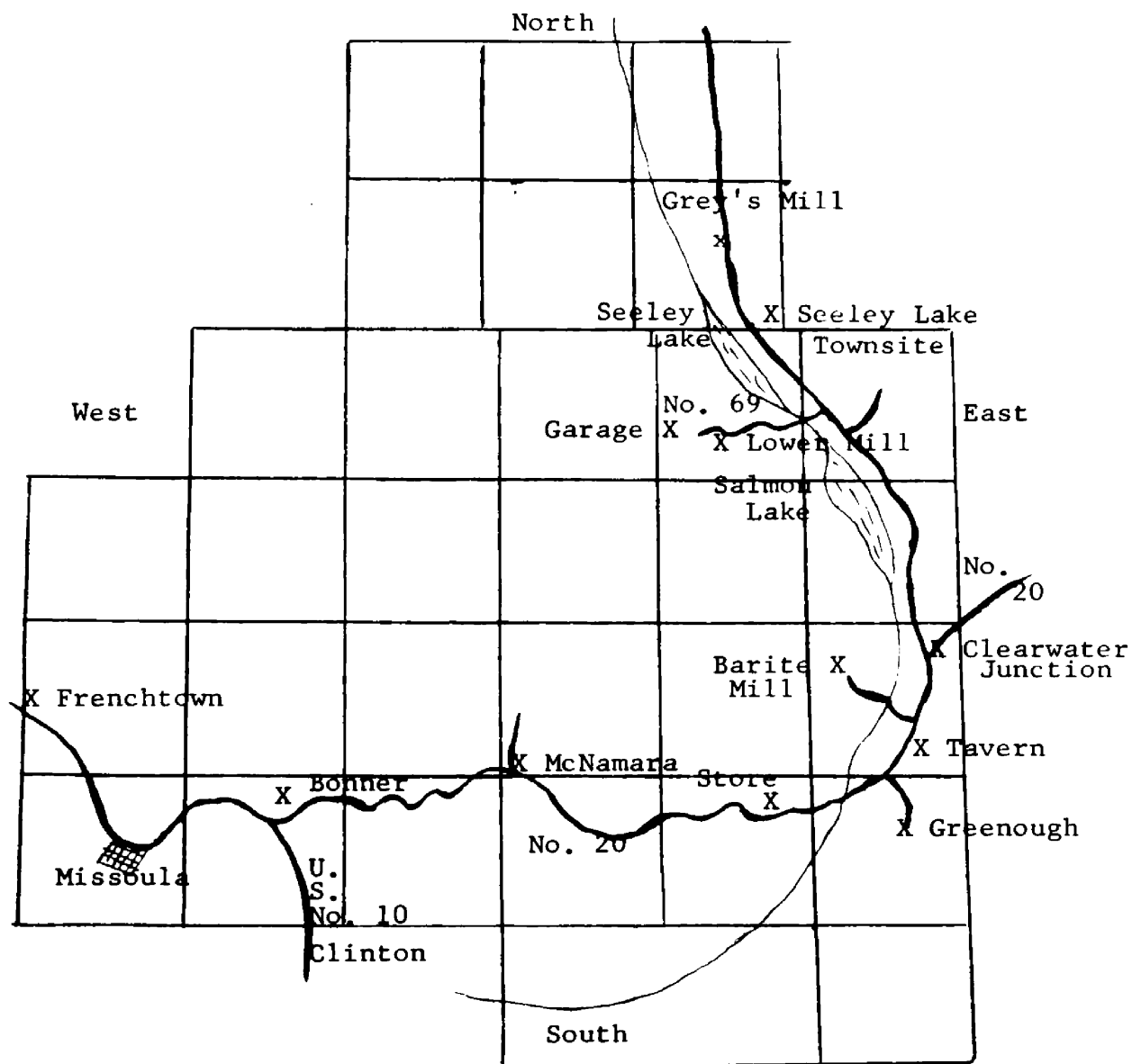
where the bus entered a cross-state road was not plowed out before the bus went through in the morning. The bus bucked drifts and could have been stuck in snowdrifts. There were no houses along most of this distance to offer shelter to the students if the bus should get stuck. Big logging trucks traveling at high speeds were another hazard of the road at other times. As the route is described the places which worried parents will be pointed out.

The distance from the corner where the first students boarded the bus in the morning to the Missoula County High School on South Avenue in Missoula measured 76.6 miles. Those students who boarded the bus first were the last ones off the bus at night. In 1960 six students rode the entire distance each day.

The route which the bus traveled each school day is shown on Map No. I. The bus began its run at six o'clock in the morning when it picked up the first students near the garage which was in the little community near the "lower" mill south of Seeley Lake townsite. The bus traveled along county road No. 69 to the main highway which went into Seeley Lake. This was the two-lane, black-topped road built by the federal government. This two-lane highway was county road No. 66. When the bus entered county road No. 66, it turned north and went through the Seeley Lake townsite to Gray's mill which was eight miles north of Seeley Lake post office. At Gray's mill two boys boarded the bus. The bus turned around here and started for Missoula.

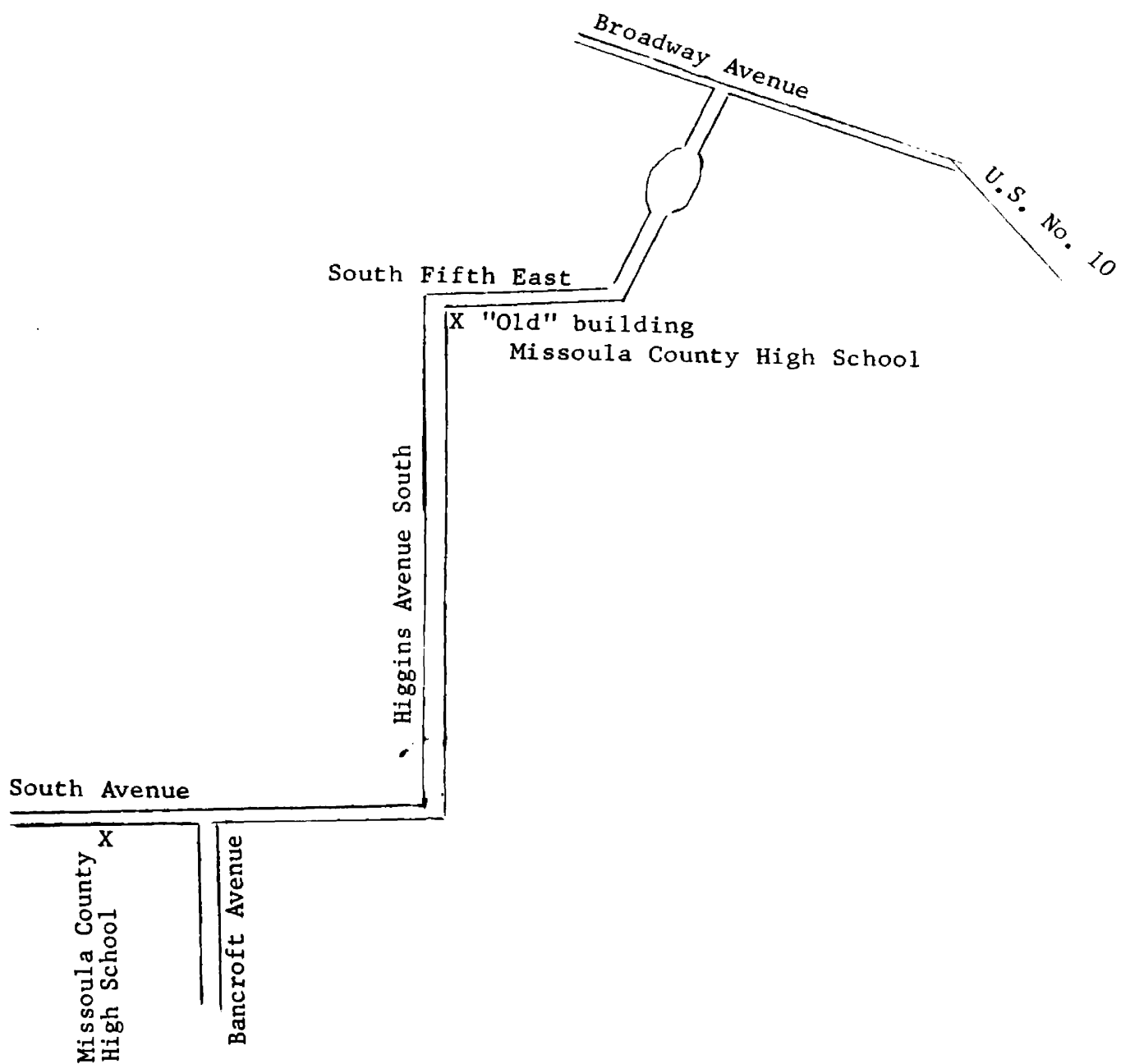
Map II

Missoula County



Missoula County showing location of Seeley Lake, Greenough, McNamara, the mills discussed in the study and the bus route.

Map III



Route of the school bus within the city of Missoula.

Between Gray's mill and Seeley Lake post office two more students boarded the bus. The bus retraced its way to the point where it entered the two-lane highway and then on to Missoula. Within the next three miles two more girls boarded the bus.

The distance from Gray's mill to Clearwater Junction was twenty-five miles. At Clearwater Junction the bus entered the cross-state highway No. 20. At Greenough several more students boarded the bus. Students boarded the bus frequently until the bus reached a point just east of Bonner, 7 miles out of Missoula.

At Bonner the bus entered federal highway No. 10, following this highway into Missoula. Three blocks after entering Missoula, the bus turned to the left, crossed a bridge and turned onto South Fifth Street East, going to Higgins Avenue. Between Eddy and Connell streets was the "old building" of the Missoula County High School.

Map No. II shows the route through Missoula and shows the front entrances of the two high school buildings where the Seeley Lakers attend classes. The first students to board the bus in the morning have been on the bus for nearly two hours and thirty minutes when they departed from the bus at the South Avenue Missoula County High School.

The road was "blacktopped" all the way from Gray's mill to the South Avenue Building of the Missoula County High School. There were chuckholes in this surfacing at various times of the year,



APR • 63

Figure 1

Front view of "old building" of Missoula County High School on Higgins Avenue in Missoula, Montana 1960



APR • 63

Figure 2

Front view of the South Avenue building of the Missoula County High School, 1960

especially in the spring time when the frost went out of the ground. Heavy logging trucks, traveling at high speed, gave this road hard wear and contributed to the problems of the school bus driver and to the anxiety of the families. Logs must be loaded with precision, or the load will tip. As these huge trucks came careening down the road, no one could be certain that precise loading techniques were used, or that the load had not shifted. Frequently, along the side of the road, there was mute evidence that such techniques had not been used, that the load had not been securely chained, or that it had shifted when going around a sharp curve.

During the winters the roads were snowpacked. Newly fallen snow or rain caused these snowpacked areas to be slippery. Icy roads were a problem and a source of apprehension for parents, the driver and the students.

When the bus traveled at a moderately fast rate of speed, the route would be covered in about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. When the roads were icy, such speed could not be maintained with safety; yet the driver was expected to have students at Missoula County High School when school opened. Certain places in the road - places which, when icy, worried the parents - will be discussed later in this chapter.

When there was rain in the valleys, and with the temperatures being lower at higher altitudes, the rain turned to sleet. The Seeley Lake road became icy from these conditions.

The road presented different problems in the evening from those in the morning; this was true for all seasons of the year. Five miles south of the Seeley Lake post office, the road had been cut out of the hillside. Below the road was the river. The shoulders were narrow, and there were no railings to deter a slipping bus. The road had a down grade at this point, adding to the problems of the driver, and more so, when the road was slippery. Pictures 3 and 4 show the steep embankment and the narrow shoulders, but the grade in the road is not evident in these pictures. This was one of the places parents mentioned as a source of worry when the roads were icy or snowpacked. There was a white cross at this point to show that at least one fatal accident had occurred here.

At the head of Salmon Lake the hillside by the road was barren. In wet weather rocks rolled from this hill onto the road. Covered with freshly fallen snow, these rocks were hard to see within the range of headlights, and the bus traveled in darkness, both morning and evening. A swiftly moving bus would have trouble stopping when the roads were icy or merely wet with rain. Picture No. 5 on page 39 shows the hill and the curve which goes to the left. The informants in Seeley Lake indicated that many cars failed to negotiate this curve and slid into the lake at this point. No shoulders existed at this point of the curve to help the driver, and there were no guard rails.



APR • 63

Figure 3

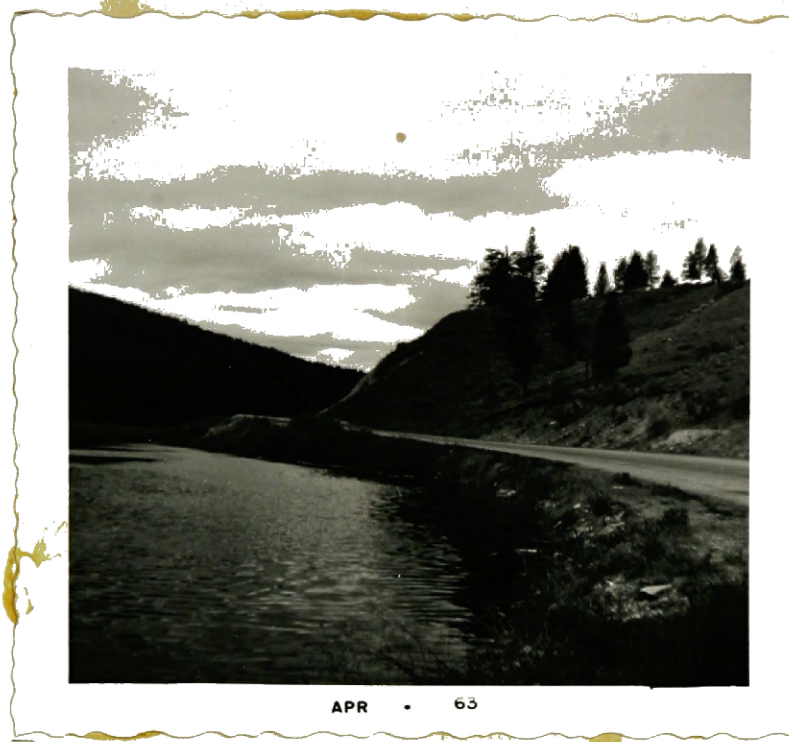
View of the road to Seeley Lake. Steep embankment and narrow shoulders, river below, 1960



APR • 63

Figure 4

Views on road No. 66 to Seeley Lake, Montana, 1960



APR • 63

Figure 5

Hill from which rocks rolled in wet weather, also, curve which goes to left, narrow shoulders bordering on Salmon Lake, 1960.

The families were concerned about the road around Salmon Lake. In the evening, approaching the lake from the south, the bus went down a steep grade and turned sharply to the right. Cars have gone into the lake at this point, even when there was no ice or snow on the road. Again, there were no guard rails here. Picture No. 6 does not show the steep grade, but it gives some idea of the length of the grade as the car at the bottom of the hill is hardly discernible in the picture. The water the lake can be seen in this picture. At the top of the grade and behind



APR • 63

Figure 6

Long grade with Salmon Lake visible at the bottom of grade, 1960.

the spot where the cameraman was standing were two white crosses. Parents commented that death did hover over this stretch of the road and they did worry about it. There were no permanent homes near this spot in the road.

Down grades with sharp turns to the left caused worry. Rain in the Missoula area became sleet or snow in the Seeley Lake country. The snow on county road No. 66 between Seeley Lake and the junction with highway No. 20 was not plowed before eight o'clock in the morning. The school bus passed this stretch of road earlier than eight o'clock. It was this Seeley Lake school bus

that broke the trail.¹

The road, immediately preceeding the Clearwater Junction, stretched across the prairie. Snow drifted on the road. The boys who were interviewed at McNamara mentioned this stretch as a part of the route which would worry them if they ever rode the bus over this road. They commented that there were no houses in this area to shelter students or anyone to offer help in case of need.

At Clearwater Junction, the bus entered state highway No. 20 which had "through" traffic during the night as well as the day. The snowplows worked on this road whenever there was a storm because there were no "hours" for these snowplow crews. This road became snowpacked and icy, too. However, the road surface was not the only concern on this road. Eight and four-tenths miles from Clearwater Junction on the way to Missoula there was a "blind" railroad crossing. Trains serviced the barite mill, a short distance from the crossing.

In the evening, parents worried about some stretches of road which did not worry them in the morning. They worried about these stretches in the springtime rather than in the wintertime. Sixteen

¹ Attempts have been made to remedy the situation. The Missoulian, a Missoula, Montana newspaper, reported on January 11, 1961, that the school board member from Seeley Lake had proposed that the School Board ask the County Commissioners to have the hours for the removal of snow from the roads in the Seeley Lake area changed so that the roads would be cleared for the school bus. This motion was made at the meeting of the Missoula County High School Board of January 10, 1961.

miles from the Missoula County High School on highway No. 20 was a stretch of road along the Blackfoot River. The picture indicates how close the road was to the river bed. Whenever the ice jams spilled the water over the road, the driver would hesitate to go through. Three days after this picture was taken in May of 1961, flares were posted on the shoulders, indicating that they were not safe for travel. The road was narrow at this point.

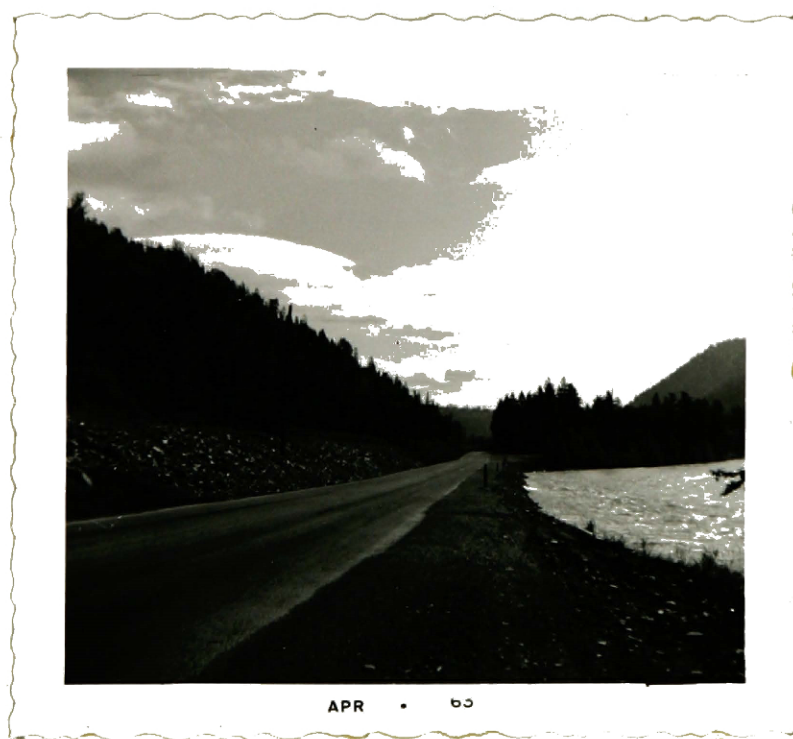


Figure 7

Highway No. 20 bordering on Blackfoot River, 1960.



APR • 63

Figure 8

Narrow shoulders on the road in McNamara area, 1961.

As shown in the above picture, the road had just come out of a sharp curve. The two posts in the foreground would help steer a vehicle back onto the road which turned slightly to the left. Beyond the automobile the reader can see how narrow the shoulders were. This area is near McNamara, 19 miles from Missoula County High School.

The problems were not merely the road. Other vehicles on the highway presented problems. The logging trucks were mentioned earlier in this chapter. Semi-trailers became a factor. The people of McNamara talked about the time a semi-trailer jackknifed across the icy road and held up traffic for several hours. This

happened during the early morning hours; and, after it became evident that traffic would not be moving both ways in time for the children to get such out of the school day, the bus turned around and took the children home.

When the people of Seeley Lake area desired a school bus to take their children to the Missoula County High School, these problems were not mentioned; but when the people cared to have a high school in Seeley Lake their apprehensions about the road were discussed at length. The roads were not the only problems of the school bus route which needed consideration. The schedule maintained, despite the various hazards of the trip, seemed to everyone concerned an oppressive burden.

CHAPTER V

PROBLEMS OF SCHOOL BUS RIDERS

A school bus route presents problems. Especially was this true of the Feeley Lake school bus route, which required a long trip over mountain roads. The bus carried the students during the nine months of fall, winter and spring. Each season presented its own problems.

Regularity of the schedule. No matter how trustworthy and reliable the driver of the school bus was, there were times when he was late. Parents mentioned that usually the bus was on time. However, the writer is aware of one morning when the bus was an hour late because the driver overslept.

Whenever the bus was late, it created a hardship for the riders, especially if the weather was cold or there was snow or rain. Both parents and students stated that it demanded courage and determination to stand by the road in the darkness just before dawn, in the intense cold, listening to the snap of twigs and then silence. The students said they feared to leave the roadside because the bus might be along any minute, and it would not wait if they were not there.

The mother of family No. S 3 expressed her apprehension thus:

She stands out there in the old cold and darkness and blizzard; and sometimes you see the bus pick her up, and sometimes you don't. You don't know until it's daylight, and you see she's gone. One way or the other. And it's happened both ways.

The father in family No. 5 2 explained his experiences this way:

Yes, he's fairly regular. Usually, I have to take her down, especially in cold weather, and we've waited all the way from fifteen minutes to half an hour for him. And by the same token, we've chased him all the way down to Clearwater Junction.

Heat on the bus. Another problem for the Seeley Lake bus riders was heating on the bus. Americans are accustomed to riding in vehicles which are heated. It was reported by several of the students that, many times, the heaters did not work or the heat was not distributed evenly. Even when the heaters did work well, there would be a problem; for each time the door was opened to admit students, cold air rushed in. The temperatures in the Seeley Lake area are below zero most mornings during the winter months. Students tried to provide warmth by taking quilts and blankets to wrap themselves in.

Clothing. The type of clothing worn by the students presented a problem. The Seeley Lakers dressed warmly for the ride into Missoula, and, many times, there would be quite a difference between temperatures in Seeley Lake and Missoula. Sometimes, in this region, temperatures rise rapidly with the sun.

The Seeley Lakers left home before sunup. Seeley Lakers, consequently, found themselves dressed too warmly for Missoula temperatures during the afternoon.

Skin color and facial characteristics are high visibility factors in ethnicity. Clothes are high visibility factors of ethnicity for high school students. The bus rider from Seeley Lake would be dressed differently than the students living in Missoula. The Seeley Laker wore heavier clothing during the winter months, and he wore this heavy clothing longer into the springtime than the others. Seeley Lake remained cold longer than did the valley communities; the mornings were still dark when the school bus began its run into Missoula. When a majority are wearing a fashion or a material, to wear something else makes a person feel uncomfortable.¹ Concern about appearances is very common among adolescents, especially girls.² People cannot stand to be laughed at, and to imagine that people are laughing at one may be as bad as the actual laughter.³

¹Paul H. Landis, Social Control (Chicago, Illinois: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1956) p. 309.

²Mildred Thurow Tate and Oris Glisson, Family Clothing (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1961) p. 231.

³Landis, op. cit., p. 314.

The girls in Seeley Lake complained that their cotton skirts were all wrinkled when they arrived at school. They would tend to wear woolen skirts much longer than would the girls in Missoula. Girls at Greenough and at McNamara did not feel that their clothes became too badly wrinkled during the ride to school.

Some parents were more than a little concerned with the school regulation regarding the clothes worn to school. Father No. S 2 had the following to say about this matter:

Speaking about the clothes problem. I've had quite an argument with the professors in the school. I realize they have a problem, too, but nonetheless, I feel that these girls should be allowed to wear jeans or pants, long pants of some kind or sort for this cold bus ride. They argue that they certainly can, but they can't wear them in school. They either have to wear them on the bus and change when they get to school or try to wear them underneath their dresses or something of that sort. And I've tried to point out that it isn't satisfactory; that it's almost impossible to do and keep their clothes in any kind of shape or anything of that sort. They seem to think I'm completely off my rocker on it. I've talked considerably with Mr. Berry, the Principal, about it, and already I've taken up the argument with the new professor. And I still feel that during inclement weather these girls should be allowed to wear longer pants if they want to. It may be it isn't lady-like. . . . If that bus should be stalled on the road down here, the only heat is derived from the motor - they have a problem of keeping warm in the first place, and then if it should ever happen, they had to walk for help - I don't know how in the world they can do it in dresses and shoes. . . . Due to our social attitudes today; it makes a difference to a child, you know. They go wearing jeans and boy's overshoes; Mary Anna wears cowboy boots a lot if she can - around the house and ranch, they're

not out of place; lots of women wear them - even well dressed women. But if she were to go to school wearing them, she wouldn't be allowed in the door in the first place and would be frowned on by everyone there.

One boy who lived near Gray's mill took an "emergency bag" which held extra scarves, mittens and heavy socks. His family stated that this bag was kept near the door and the boy grabbed it up when he rushed to catch the bus in the morning. All Seeley Lake riders reported that they carried scarves and mittens in their coat pockets.

How the students appear in the class room is important to those of high school age. During the winter of 1959-1960, skirts and sweaters were the accepted style for female students. When warm weather came, cottons were worn by the girls, and the problem was different. One girl said:

By the time you do get to school your clothes are all wrinkled, and you might just as well not have ironed them or taken care of them because they're a mess.¹

One of the staff members at the Missoula County High School commented on her reaction when she first watched the Seeley Lake school bus unload:

I was appalled the first few times I watched those kids get off the Seeley Lake bus. They looked like they had slept in their clothes. They just drag.²

¹Girl in family No. S 5, Interview notes.

²School nurse, Interview notes.

The girls at McNamara and at Greenough did not report that they had this clothes problem. They rode the bus about an hour while the Seeley Lakers had been on the bus more than two hours when they all arrived at the high school. The boys from Seeley Lake wore heavy overcoats throughout the winter, but the boys from McNamara wore just wind breakers all year.

The concern about appearance and clothes bothered the girls from Seeley Lake more than did the hazards of the road and the temperature on the bus. Parents were apprehensive about all the problems which the school bus riders met. Although the students did arrive at school physically on time, they were fatigued and less presentable sartorially than when they left home. This certainly was another adversity that they encountered in acquiring an education - an education quite distant from their proper cultural environment.

CHAPTER VI

FAMILY AND STUDENT ADJUSTMENT

The students who ride the school bus for two hours and twenty minutes twice each school day, and their families make adjustments in the pattern of family routine to compensate for the time spent on the bus. These adjustments are made according to the length of the bus ride and to the attitude the students and their families have toward the school bus. Those students living farthest from Missoula and whose parents were most interested in having a high school in the community reported the largest amount of adjusting to the school bus situation.

To better understand the problems which were met by the students who rode over the long distance, the community of Seeley Lake where the school bus route began and the route over which the school bus traveled were described in Chapters II and III. Most school bus routes have been planned so that the pupils ride the school bus for a period not exceeding sixty minutes. This means that the pupils board the bus about seven-thirty in the morning, allowing members of the family sufficient time in the morning to do early chores and then eat a hot breakfast together as a family group. However, to travel from Seeley Lake to Missoula County High School 76.6 miles away, students must board the bus at six o'clock in the morning.

Morning Schedule. In the interviews with the driver of the Seeley Lake school bus, it was ascertained that the school bus left the garage, where it was stored in the little community south of Seeley Lake post office on county road No. 69, five or ten minutes before six o'clock in the morning. Almost immediately students boarded the bus for the trip to Missoula County High School.

School commenced at 8:30 in the morning in Missoula County High School. When the bus maintained its schedule between Seeley Lake and Missoula County High School in Missoula, it arrived at the high school at 8:20 A.M. The six students who boarded the bus at six o'clock in the morning had been on the bus two hours and twenty minutes when they finally stepped from the bus. These six students were the ones who had the longest ride at night, for they also were the last ones to leave the bus.

Rising Hour in the Morning. Although defined as a rural community, Seeley Lake had some characteristics that were more urban than rural. One of these was the absence of farm animals to be attended before one goes to school or to work. Therefore, the rising hour did not have to be as early as would have been necessary for the rural farm families. Three of the four families that lived near the "lower" mill reported that they felt the early hour of rising caused a hardship.

One of the manifest functions of the home culture of the American rural farm family is to provide a substantial and hot

breakfast for the child before he departs for school.¹ The farm family breakfast is a family meal partaken after the morning chores have been done. In a study of a farm family in central New York by Howard W. Beers, it was noted, ". . . when the family is at home, each waits for the others to assemble before starting to eat."²

In the Seeley Lake area the families have two characteristics of the urban culture - there are no chores to do before breakfast and the father works a shift on a job connected with the lumber industry. Only one of the families in the Seeley Lake area had chores before the student boarded the bus. In that respect the families were more like urban families than the rural farm families. An urban family might not consider a hot breakfast essential to the welfare of the child. However, all the families in the Seeley Lake area had a feeling of guilt when they neglected to provide a hot breakfast for the school bus rider. This guilt feeling was present when the family did not share the meal with the student before he departed on the bus.

Adjusted Meal Hours. Family No. S 4 arose an hour earlier

¹Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1961) Chapter I, pp. 19-84.

²Robert F. Winch and Robert McGinnis, Marriage and The Family (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1953) p. 120.

than it felt would have been necessary because the father worked at the "lower" mill nearby. He did not start work until seven o'clock in the morning. The mother taught in the elementary school in Seeley Lake and was not needed on the job until eight o'clock. These parents both said they felt that they made a sacrifice when they rose at five o'clock so that they could eat a hot breakfast with their daughters.

The student in family No. S 6 said that she arose alone or occasionally her mother breakfasted with her. The father and younger members of the family did not need to rise so early. The mother in family No. S 6 said it was "upsetting" to get up so early. Members in family No. S 7 said that they, too, began their day earlier than would have been necessary for the father to get to work at the mill.

Family No. S 5 was not upset about getting up at five in the morning because this family would have had to arise at this hour anyway. The menfolks in this family left for work at six o'clock. This family had its adjustment to make in the afternoon when the men came home at four o'clock, hungry, wanting their evening meal. One of the latent aspects of the early rising in mornings was to unite the four families in the community by the "lower" mill in inaugurating action to secure a high school for the Seeley Lake area.

Both families that lived near Gray's mill, a little grouping of homes about eight miles north of Seeley Lake post office,

and at the point where the school bus turned around to make the trip into Missoula, said that they rose earlier than they would if they did not have to meet the demands of the school bus schedule. The bus left Gray's mill about 6:15 A.M.

Family No. S 1 reported that it did not try to have breakfast together. The son in this family did chores. There were cattle and horses to be fed and watered before the boy could leave on the bus. The father owned the lumbermill and had to be at the mill when the shifts changed. The daughter attended the grade school in Seeley Lake, and by the time she got up, her brother had been traveling to school for more than an hour.

Family No. S 8, which lived in the trailer near Gray's mill, said they had to rise an hour earlier than they would have done, otherwise. Both parents in family S 8 worked at the mill, and neither one had to be on the job before seven o'clock. Inasmuch as they considered it their duty to have breakfast together, they all rose early.

Between Gray's mill and Seeley Lake post office lived two families of low economic status. When small children in these families were not awakened early, the houses did not need to be heated as much as they would have to be when the children were up playing. It actually cost these families money to have to get up early in this respect just so that the older children could catch the bus; as many days the family would have stayed in bed to

conserve heat.

Families Nos. S 2 and S 3 lived below Seeley Lake several miles. The father in family No. S 3 stated that he always got up before the other members of the family. He had quite a distance to go to work and consequently left the house before his daughter did. He stated that he got up early even when he was not working.

The dude ranch family (No. S 2) stated that they had to rise early during their busy season, the hunting season in the fall. However, they would have enjoyed the extra hour of sleep in the wintertime. This family did not have chores such as a farm family would have normally.

The woman attendant at the garage in Seeley Lake stated that a boy had stayed with them the year before; she had to get up at five o'clock to get his breakfast; and she then drove him to the main road so that he could take the bus. After she returned home, she wakened her husband and family and prepared their breakfast. She felt that the hardship was too great to repeat with her own children when they would be riding the school bus.

These people felt that the adjustments in the manifest functions of rising and eating at undesirable hours did violate their sense of social justice and were a further reason for their efforts on behalf of a high school at Seeley Lake.

Whereas the families in the Seeley Lake area felt that they were making a sacrifice for their children's education by

rising early in the morning, the Greenough and McNamara families, who lived much nearer to Missoula, felt they were not getting up any earlier than they had to in order to get the father in the family to his job on time. For the families in Greenough and McNamara areas there was no adjustment to be made in this respect.

The breakfast hour was changed by each family to meet the problem of having the student ready for the bus when it came. Breakfast together was not as important to families in Seeley Lake as having the evening meal together. If some member of the family had to eat supper alone or eat a warmed-over meal, he tended to feel deprived, and the others in the family sympathized with him.

Supper Hour. Just as the early rising in the morning presented problems for the families in the Seeley Lake area, so did the late supper hour or lone eater present problems for these families. One family (No. 35) in particular, found it a real hardship to adjust its evening meal to satisfy all concerned. This family which had no problems meeting the early rising hour and having an early breakfast, did have a problem in the evening. This family seemed to have the greatest adjustment to make of all the families. This family ate its midday meal at eleven o'clock A.M. When the men got off work at four o'clock they were hungry and would have liked to eat their supper shortly after arriving home. Yet this family felt that its supper hour, when the little children were still awake, was the best time for them to have an hour together. The daughter was one

who got off the bus at six o'clock in the evening, and when they delayed supper until the daughter got home, the men had endured seven hours between the noon meal and supper. The younger members of the family complained that they hardly saw the older sister, except at supper time. All members of the family thought that a cold or warmed-over meal eaten alone by the student was not fair; especially for a person who had a long day at school and, later, a long ride home.

The mill workers and their families did resent the fact that they were forced to defer their supper until after six o'clock, although they preferred to eat at four or four-thirty.

However, this same resentment was not present in the families of the mill owner and the dude rancher. These two families, which were in the upper social stratum, had their evening meals later than the others. The mill owner and his family waited until he came home, after seeing that the second shift at the mill was working well. This family reported that they enjoyed a leisurely dinner together.

The dude ranch family had a late dinner hour, for many evenings there would be paying guests; and hunting parties returning late to the home ranch would delay the dinner hour. No one resented this delay, and the bus schedule did not affect this dinner hour.

Just as the breakfast hour was no problem for the families at Greenough and McNamara, so the evening meal was no problem, either. The fathers and students arrived home about the same time.

Bedtime Hour. Just as the hour for rising in the morning needed to be adjusted to meet the demands of the school bus schedule, so did the bedtime hour need to be adjusted. When the students got up at five o'clock to catch the bus at six, they reasoned that they should go to bed at an early hour, nine or ten o'clock. Some of the students claimed that they did not get to bed before midnight because they had so much school work to do. This complaint was not heard in the Greenough and McNamara areas. The mothers in these communities felt that their children got to bed at a more reasonable hour than did the students who lived in the city of Missoula. A later chapter will treat lack of sleep in discussing the health of the students. Rest on the bus was reported nearly impossible due to poor heating, noisy passengers, and dangerous roads.

Help Around the House. With the complaints about the early rising and the upset meal schedule came complaints that the students had little time to help around the house. This seemed to be a matter of personal inclination.

The fifteen year old boy who lived near Gray's mill (family No. S 1) had time to feed and water blooded horses and to check cattle before he boarded the bus, briefly after six in the morning. He had chores to do at night when he got home. Two boys at McNamara (family No. M 15) had cows to milk, chickens to feed, and water for the house to carry from the creek before they sat down to supper. The daughter in family No. G 12 had palomino horses to feed and water

before she could eat her supper or help around the home. The boys and girls who lived nearer to Missoula lived in a more rural environment than those in Seeley Lake.

The mother in family No. G 11 at Greenough reported that she did all the work, even the personal washing for her daughter, so that the daughter could devote her time to study.

The parents at Seeley Lake felt that they had lost social control of their children who rode the bus.

Social Control. During the era when a mother and her daughter worked side by side in the kitchen and the father and his son put up hay or plowed fields together, the parents exerted a great deal of social control over the children and had much to do with the personality development of sons and daughters. In modern society there is little time for the parents to exert this control over teenagers, even when the youngsters wake up at nearly the same hour as the parents and are home from school when the father arrives from work.

Being members of a rural community and clinging to the traditions of the rural family solidarity, the Seeley Lake residents were keenly aware of the lack of time for communication and social control. Four of the parents in the Seeley Lake area commented that there was no time during the school year when the daughter and mother could sit down and "visit." Three mothers mentioned this more than once.

One mother (No. S 5) did not mention "visiting with her daughter," but she did remark that there were occasions when the girl had so much home study to do that there was no time for her to help with the supper dishes; she had to begin to study as soon as she had finished her supper. This family lived at the end of the school bus route, and the daughter was one of the last students to leave the bus in the evening, after six o'clock even when the bus was running on schedule.

Family No. S 1 made the evening meal a leisurely one. Everyone had finished chores; the father had started the second shift working at the mill so that normally his day's work was done. This was the one time in the day when this family was all together for conversation and relaxation. When the son stayed in town over night, as he sometimes did, he was missed in the family circle. His sister commented that there was no time to have fun together as there had been when the boy was still in grade school in Seeley Lake; there was no time to play or ride horses together. This family gave the interviewer the impression that it was a closely knit family group. This was true, perhaps, because socially it was an isolated family, being at the top of the social continuum.

In families where there were younger children, the youngsters expressed the feeling of loss of companionship and fun when the bus-riding students were away from home from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock or after at night. Young children said they had

to go to bed shortly after the older child got home, and these children would not be up in the morning when the student left for school.

The families were aware that the students' peer group exerted more influence than the family did. The parents resented this strong influence by the peer group.

Community Recreation. A rural community must create its own amusement when there are no commercial attractions such as those offered in larger urban centers. In Seeley Lake there were no movies for people to attend. The "bars" offered dancing to the music of juke boxes, but teenagers were not allowed to dance there. So the entertainment for the teenagers had to be "home-made."

Few of the adults in Seeley Lake had previously any opportunity to acquire recreational skills. They were not able to enjoy their own leisure adequately, nor were they able to contribute to family or group recreation. Therefore, the leadership for the community was found among the school teachers in the elementary school. One of these teachers was also the mother of students who rode the school bus to Missoula County High School, family No. S 4. She told about the parties that were held in the elementary school house all-purpose room. These parties were for students only and were not public dances. All students who rode the bus into Missoula and their chaperones were invited to these parties. The students in Seeley Lake and their parents identified themselves in sharing a

feeling of togetherness. The mother in family No. S 4 had been responsible for the planning and chaperoning of these parties for a period of several years.

The dude ranch in this study (No. S 2) was the scene of many parties given in the pattern of rural America. The families of the community were invited. The young people danced in the large dining room to local music; the younger children played games in one of the smaller rooms; and the adults visited in front of the large fireplace in the lobby. The ranch parents tried to provide fun for all their own children as well as for themselves at these parties.

The father at the ranch commented about the ski-tow he had installed and the ski club he had organized to offer the children of the community opportunity for fun as well as exercise.

In areas similar to Seeley Lake, where the population is scattered, there are no organized facilities such as parks and playgrounds with recreational directors in charge of activities. Students in these areas would have little money to spend on recreation even were it available. Yet, when people's recreational needs are met satisfactorily, the people are more content and many facets of their lives are improved.

Since the adults had not been properly trained in their own youth as leaders, the social life supplied by the community was not adequate to compensate for the frustrations experienced by the students who attended Missoula County High School. There was no chance for these students to attend any of the movies their urban

classmates talked about. Some of the teachers assigned a movie of a great epic as part of the work for a course. This was an added frustration.

CHAPTER VII

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

High School education is just as necessary for the rural adolescent as for the urban young person. Youth must learn at school how to prepare for a job and for family responsibility in the dynamic culture of his time. Many rural youths will move to the urban center to earn a living. The rural adolescent, also, must acquire education in skills necessary for a satisfying life and for the perpetuation of American democratic society.

The boundaries of the attendance area should be drawn to fit into the natural social groupings of the rural population. The child should attend a high school where he feels at home. There should be no feeling of 'country kids' and 'city kids.' ¹

Ethnicity readily develops when part of each class rides a bus to school.

The urban child moves from grades into high school naturally and with a minimum of anxiety. For the child who transfers from a small rural school to a large urban school the transition is not an easy one. The teachers in the rural school were familiar

¹George A. Works and Simon O. Lesser, Rural America Today, Its Schools and Community Life (Chicago, Illinois, University of Chicago Press, 1942) p. 55.

with the child and with his parents and his background. The rural child is usually shy due to his lack of social contact with many and varying situations. He finds it difficult to adjust to a different type of class situation. He is not familiar with the library and other facilities offered for his use. But all these adjustments must be made by any rural child when he lives within easy riding distance of the school. For the student who has ridden 76.6 miles before he gets to school all these frustrations and anxieties are even more pronounced.

Besides the adjustment in rising, the bedtime and meal hours, there were adjustments made to the social situation. Although the family made its greatest adjustment at its homesite, it was affected by the adjustments the students had to make to the school situation; the family felt anxiety, too, for the student. What the student gained out of his school experience reflected the value of the effort made in getting a high school education.

At present the schools are given much more responsibility for transmitting the culture of the society to the young than when the country was typically rural. Much of the personality development of the youth lies within the schools today.

In a conscientious effort to meet the challenge of this responsibility which society has placed upon the school, the educational system has discarded the "little red school house" as much as possible. Good roads and motorized transportation make it

possible to develop a consolidated school at a central point, in place of many "little red school houses" to which the pupils walked in days gone by.

The increasing number of pupils makes it possible to have more teachers, each teaching the subject he has been trained to teach, instead of several subjects. The larger tax base from which to derive revenue enables the school board to add many features to the curriculum which the "little red school house" could not possibly offer, such as extracurricular activities and social functions.

By enlarging the size of the student body, the range and variety of social contacts are greatly increased. Peer groups can be established according to age level, thereby giving better opportunities for leadership and self-expression for the pupils. The larger teaching staff makes it possible to have personnel trained in the fields of music, drama, and athletics.

The parents of the Seeley Lake bus riders admitted that all these advantages were present in the Missoula County High School. However, these parents felt that their children were denied the "social" advantages because the students could not attend any of the social functions held after school or in the evenings. The girls felt like "outsiders" because they could not participate in the social life of the school. The girls expressed the feeling that there was a "class distinction" between bus students and those living in Missoula. They resented this.

The daughter in family No. S 6 stated that she had a friend who came out to Feeley Lake to see her periodically. She felt that the distance was too great for the friend to drive out often and that she would have a better chance to make and keep friends if she were living in town during the school year. She said that she liked to make friends and felt that she could not do this very well when she rode the bus. This girl was planning to get a part-time job in Missoula so that she could pay her expenses of staying in town. She said that she was "determined" to attend the Junior Prom, but could not do this if she rode the bus.

The daughter on the dude ranch said that some of the Missoula students were "snippy, snooty ones." She also said:

You sort of have a feeling that you're left out. You can't join anything. They [meaning the city students] talk about things and you don't know anything about it because they've gone and you haven't."¹

The son in the family living by Gray's mill (No. S 1) said:

I never made any friends until I stayed in town. Now, I have lots of friends. You can't make friends running for the bus."²

The children who lived in the converted school house and the old barn (Nos. S 9 and S 10) said they had trouble with making friendships, too. They expressed it, "Now, they don't like us."

¹ and ² Girl in family No. S 2 and boy in family No. S 1,
Interview notes.

However, for the students living in Greenough and McNamara, the feeling about making friends seemed to be a different story. The son in family No. M 14 at McNamara said that he had "no trouble making friends."

The mother in family No. M 13, also of McNamara, felt that her daughter made friends slowly because she was quiet and shy, not because she lived in the country and rode to school on the bus. This mother felt that her daughter had sufficient entertainment and recreation to offer the friends she did make in Missoula. In the country there were horses to ride, bikes, and fishing in the Blackfoot River just across the road from McNamara.

Furthermore, a mother at Greenough stated that both her girls had many friends in Missoula. She felt that making friends anywhere depended on the people involved. She stated that her girls were accustomed to meeting people because they did live at the rear of the tavern at Greenough. The other mother in Greenough stated that her daughter "doesn't care for those things they [meaning the urban pupils in Missoula County High School] talk about." This may be a way of rationalizing that the bus riders are not accepted as a part of the Missoula County High School's sub-culture.

Several alumnae of the Missoula County High School confirmed the rural students' feelings of being left out. They stated that Missoula urbanites did consider those who rode the school buses as "farmers" and that they did look down on them. The bus riders were

not accepted in many of the "inner circles" within the school community.

The bus students also had little opportunity to attend club meetings, as these were held after school or in the early evening hours. The Seeley Lakers and those from Greenough and McNamara would either be riding home or just finishing their evening meal at the time when the clubs were meeting.

Clubs in High School. Friendships are made in clubs and working together on projects after school in the smaller sub-cultures of a larger school culture. The bus student has little chance to attend club meetings as these usually are held after school or in the early evening. "An impatient bus" . . . is a hard taskmaster, the students felt.¹ Clubs, as extracurricular activities, as a part of the school life, are part of the training for future citizenship responsibility which the schools must give the students.

It was reported that in the "old" building of the Missoula County High School, located on Higgins Avenue, there were some clubs which met during the noon hour. However, as these clubs appeared to be just another class, the students were not eager to join. They chose rather to leave the building to mingle with those who walked to a hamburger stand a few blocks away.

A manifest function of the after-school or early evening

¹Op. cit., p. 131.

meeting was to give the urban pupil something to do. A latent function for the parents was a reason for the pupil to be away from home and out from under foot; for the bus rider this was not a reason for joining a club. They wanted some glamour attached to the membership, such as the Pep Club supplied. The members of the Pep Club were active at athletic events. The daughter in family No. S 2 reported that she wanted to belong to the Pep Club. However, it was not feasible for her father to take her into town for the games which were held in the evening or on Saturday afternoon. He was an outfitter taking hunters into the back country; thus, the weekend was his busy time of the week. The dining room at the ranch was also so busy that the mother could not take time to drive her into town. The daughter felt that it was difficult to belong to a club and not attend its activities. She resented this kind of social activity.

The boy in family No. S 1 said that he could not join a club because he rode the bus. He liked to wrestle, and membership in the wrestling club required attendance of meetings after school to practice. The boy's grandmother expressly moved into Missoula to provide a home for him so that he could attend the wrestling club meetings. For this boy, the problem of joining his favorite club was solved because his parents could afford to buy a house near the school and he had a grandmother who could maintain a home there for him. The others who rode the bus from Seeley Lake were not

so fortunate.

Even the student who rode a short distance on the bus had problems in joining clubs. One mother (No. M 13, McNamara) said that she was willing to drive her daughter into Missoula for evening meetings when the roads were in good condition, but she did not like to drive over icy roads at night. This mother reported that her daughter had to drop out of Horizon Club because she had missed three meetings during the winter when road conditions had prevented driving to Missoula.

Mother No. G 11 at Greenough said that on some occasions the Greenough girls telephoned that they had had to stay after school for a special meeting of the Home Economics Club. The mother said that either she or the mother at the tavern went into town for the girls when this happened. These families at Greenough had telephones permitting the girls to telephone home; furthermore, the distance of 33 miles was not too great for the parents to go in to pick up the girls. At Seeley Lake, it will be recalled, the families had no telephones. Moreover, 76.6 or even 65 miles was too great a distance for parents to drive for their children.

School Dances and Dating. Just as the clubs held meetings after school or in the evening, so were the parties and dances held in the evening. Manifest functions of the dances and parties are giving students a good time. The latent functions of the school dance or party are teaching the young people "the social

graces" and helping them evaluate the opposite sex in preparation for searching for a life mate.

A sub-culture develops when part of the class members attend a dance and part of them do not. Resentment toward the other group develops as the school bus riders feel themselves pushed out of the larger group. The girls at Seeley Lake felt that there was no place for them in the group which discussed party clothes and who would date whom; particularly, as the time for the dance approached. Nor did they enjoy listening to the other girls giggle and laugh over happenings at the dance after it was over.

In the American teenage sub-culture, steady dating is the rule. It is hard for a girl or boy to have a "steady" when 65 miles separate them from their dates every weekend. There would be no time for movies or just "cruising the drag."

In respect to the social aspects, the rural student who lives too far away to attend the school dances and parties is no better off than he was in the days of the "little red school house" when he met only those persons he had always known. This was the opinion expressed by both students and the parents in Seeley Lake.

Athletics. Several of the fathers in the Seeley Lake area commented on the fun their boys were missing because they could not be on school athletic teams. The athlete has status on the campus; he is the boy who is popular with the girls and envied by the other boys. Teachers comment on the success of the teams and

of individual players. The boys who were not able to "go out for" the teams felt left out. Some school bus riders resented their categoric inability to play.

The boy in family No. 3 8 remarked that he felt that his fellow students and teachers treated him much better after he had won a few boxing matches and his picture appeared in the "Missoulian," Missoula's daily newspaper. This boy had taken lessons from an ex-boxer who was at one of the local cafes in Seeley Lake. The boy was not even on a school team, yet he felt that the teachers and students noticed him after he won a few matches.

The father in family No. 3 2 summed up the feelings of all the parents thus:

It seems to me that a boy presents a little more of a problem in high school than a girl does. I don't know why they should, but boys have always been held in high school by athletic activities - football, basketball, and so on. And you take a big husky boy that enjoys football and basketball and send him into Missoula on the bus and say, 'No, you can't take part, that's all there is to it; you just can't; you're there strictly to study,' and he loses half his interest right away. He sees fellows in Missoula that he knows, playing and enjoying it and making the team, getting letters and possibly honorary mention and he's just another guy that sits in class. I know how I would have felt about that. I took football, basketball and band in high school, four years for all three, and anyone who would have told me that I would have to eliminate all three of them, I would have told them that I would eliminate high school then, too. I know that Maryanna wanted to take part awfully bad in the Pep Club and she tried early in the Fall. In fact, she made one football game as a result of it.

A manifest function of school sports is to develop the physical side of the boys, also a sense of sportmanship and team

spirit. For the spectators there is school loyalty. One of the latent functions of school sports is the development of a sense of civic pride and the willingness to be loyal to your community, without any actual compensation than respect from your peers and satisfaction of having done your bit to make the school or home community a better place.

Band and Drama. Being in the band or in plays also gives the student status. Although practice time is allotted during the school day, the band performs at night or on Saturday afternoons. Plays are given at night, too. As the daughter in family No. 8 5 said:

And then, if there was any occasion for the band to play, I wouldn't be able to play. Usually the band plays on Friday night and if there was any extra practice I wouldn't be able to go. That makes it kind of hard on the band director.

The father in this same family said:

Both my son and daughter have always been band students all their lives, ever since they were old enough to be in band and that was one of the biggest sacrifices, having to drop band.

Many families in the Seeley Lake area regretted that their children did not have a chance to have band and drama experience. Again, the manifest function of band and drama clubs is giving the students something to do and enjoy, but the latent function is preparing them to take their places in adult circles with some means of gaining satisfaction in contributing to the betterment of the

community.

The students who rode the bus from Seeley Lake into Missoula to attend the Missoula County High School resented the fact that the opportunities of the consolidated school are formally within their grasp, but in reality they can not have them.

The question arose, "Why don't these students stay in Missoula overnight for occasions like the senior prom and other big events?" We have mentioned that one student had a grandmother living in town with whom he stayed. However, most of the students did not have relatives in Missoula with whom they could stay. Parents would object to their children lodging in motels or hotels.

Most events, interesting the students enough to remain in town, occur Friday nights or Saturday afternoons. There was no way for the students to reach Seeley Lake until the next Monday night unless the parents went into Missoula for them or their host took them home.

Family No. 5 6 made arrangements some times for the daughter to stay in town with friends, and the next day to transport her home. They reported that this was not done very often. They were aware they could not make a habit of this.

The families in the Seeley Lake area all reported that they worried if their students were not on the bus at night. Since there were no phones in the homes in Seeley Lake, there was no way for the student to let the family know that he was safe.

By increasing the number of students per school the range and variety of social contacts is increased, providing the students are able to take advantage of the situation and still meet the demands of the ever-impatient bus.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SCHOOL SITUATION

The school prepares the youth of the country for his role of citizen. The institution of the home has passed to the institution of the school much of the responsibility for the training of the child which the home once considered was its sole right. In the home, adults help the child over hurdles which he can not make himself. The teacher in the school is the adult who helps the child over the hurdles he cannot make himself there. Consequently, the relationship between the teacher and the student is very important. The educational mores tend to incorporate the theory that the teacher is responsible for the situation and, also, that the pupil has a right for extra help with his lessons when he does not understand them or has missed classes and has work to make up.

For the Seelley Lake school bus rider to have the teacher give him extra help presented a problem. When, as was the case, the school bus left immediately after the last class was dismissed, the student had no time to request help; he had to be at the curb ready to board the bus when it arrived. The bus did not wait for late-comers.

Teacher Assistance. The students reported that when the bell rang dismissing the last class, the building seemed to explode as the students rushed to their lockers and then to the buses which were waiting for them. This situation was hard on the teachers, too, according to one of the boys (family No. S 5). He was aware of the hardship on the teacher; his comment was, "The teacher may be left with her last sentence half spoken."¹

Some students were fortunate to have a study hall period during the same hour their teacher had a free period. In such cases arrangements could be made for extra assistance within the school day. All the families at Seeley Lake commented on the lack of extra help the teachers at the South Avenue Building of the Missoula County High School afforded the students.

The time element was not quite the same at the Higgins Avenue Building of the Missoula County High School; the bus arrived there ten minutes after school was dismissed, having stopped at the South Avenue Building first. However, the pupil had one eye on the clock the entire time the teacher was making an explanation so that he did not get full benefit of the teacher's help.

The mother in family No. S 3 complained that even when they had made appointments with the teacher and had made the trip into town to keep the appointment, there were other pupils standing in

¹ Boy in family No. S 5, from Interview notes.

line waiting for help. There was so little time allotted to each pupil that the mother felt the trip had been a waste of time and effort. The mother said that the teacher was very nice but that she could not put those from out of town ahead of those who lived in town as first come first served was the rule.

Cadet teachers pointed out opposite inadequacies. Some of the students, who did not have their lessons prepared, used distracting tactics to disguise this fact, especially when a cadet teacher was in charge. They knew that the cadets could not keep the students after school to complete the assignment, nor could the students be kept after school when they misbehave in class.

The Negro in the South takes various risks to build up pride and solidarity among his people. These risks involve ignoring caste etiquette, behaving impudently, and even ominously toward whites. The whites pretend not to notice. Yet these risks increase the prestige of the Negro individual.¹ The school bus rider, like the Negro behaves impudently and menacingly to build up prestige, the bus rider used distracting tactics to attract attention of classmates. The school bus rider has limited ways of calling attention to himself because he can not gain status through the accepted ways. The

¹ Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper Brothers, 1944) pp. 771-772.

latter include participation in the band, the Pep Club, the drama club, and athletics.

Reference Work and Library Books. Reference work was another problem for the school bus riders. Among the Seeley Lake families there was an apprehension that too many assignments required references. The students complained that they could not take library books out unless their parents came to the library and signed for the books. The parents complained that when they did make special trips into Missoula to get books from the library they found the books already checked out. The majority of parents in the Seeley Lake area complained about the difficulty of getting reference books.¹

Some of the students, especially those living in the McNamara and Greenough areas, said they had their Missoula friends get library books for them. One of the girls from Seeley Lake (family No. S 3) reported that on one occasion, instead of going to the track meet for which school had been dismissed that day, she went to the city library to get information for a paper she was writing.

Parents and students gave two reasons for low grades: deficiency in teacher assistance and lack of available reference material. The father in family No. S 2 said this about reference work:

¹The writer tried to question librarians about parents' needing to be present when school bus students checked out books. The librarians were very vague in their replies. Either no bus student ever had tried to check out a book or the questions asked were so vague that no ground for communication was established.

We had a number of problems on this reference business last year. On two or three things Maryanna did in Social Studies she was required to get help other than from the encyclopedia; which meant that she could get a book in the school library for one hour that she was there, or else she could check out a book from the County Library. But a high school child can't check out books from the County Library without her parents being present. So, if she got references from the County Library we had to make a special trip to town, meet her at school, and hurry to the County Library to be able to get the reference book and get it done before they closed. And then we'd have the late ride home. That is the only way she can get her outside references. We noticed a very definite drop in Maryanna's grade in high school down there. She always had good grades in grade school. She graduated salutatorian in her class here in Seeley Lake and was always at least a B student, I would say. It crowds her to maintain a C average.

The mother in family No. S 3 said:

And usually she had reference work to look for. And you cannot find it up here and by the time you get to Missoula, they've (books) all been taken out by the kids down there and still you don't get 'em, so there you are.

Grades. Good grades were another of the problems which bothered students and parents. Everyone in the Seeley Lake area complained about the difficulty of maintaining good grades.

Mother No. S 6 told about a girl, an A student in the school she attended before she moved to Seeley Lake and began to ride the bus,

The girl came up here and started going to Missoula High and she got down to a C.

Mother No. S 8 said:

One boy was valedictorian up here and he couldn't cut the mustard down there.

Father No. S 2:

The children that ordinarily would maintain a C average, we'd say, can't possibly maintain this average and ride the bus. I'd say that any child is going to drop ten or fifteen points average in his school work on this bus ride and the people I know well enough to actually question what their child is doing have borne this out. So you find that a student who has a B or B minus average is having a C average and a C student is just on the border between passing and failing.

The parents in the McNamara and Greenough areas did not report this trouble with reference work and grades falling off. Both mothers at Greenough reported that their daughters were on the honor roll and that older children who had ridden the bus graduated with honors. The mothers in McNamara area felt their children were doing all right. One mother, No. M 15, said that one of her boys was repeating his grade, not because he had trouble getting help from his teachers or reference work but because he had been ill the previous year, and the family felt he should repeat the year.

The parents in the Seeley Lake area were afraid that their young people would not graduate from high school. They feared that the students would not be able to overcome the long bus ride and its effects well enough to keep up their grades.

Drop Outs. "Drop outs" are students who do not complete high school. These students are a problem in all schools, especially in the rural areas where students do not "see" the need for a high school

education and where the parents are not as eager to keep the teenager in school as is the case in the urban or rural areas.

Dropouts caused the parents in the Seeley Lake area much anxiety. The reasons for the dropouts seemed to be various. Most frequently mentioned were the long hours on the school bus, the mental and physical exhaustion, and the discouragement of low grades. Some attributed the dropouts among the boys to the fact that bus riders could not be on athletic teams and the boys were conscious of the prestige that goes with the sports. Girls cited inability to belong to clubs or go to the school dances as reasons for dropping out of school.

The mental and physical exhaustion will be discussed in the following chapter. Some of the aspects of the dropouts have been discussed in previous chapters but will be reviewed here.

The school bus left Seeley Lake area shortly after six o'clock in the morning. This meant that the students were rising at five o'clock or a little after that. Students did not like these early rising hours. They were riding the bus for more than two hours before they arrived at school. The ride home at night took another two, or two and one-half hours. There was little time to do anything but go to school and ride the bus. Winter came early in the Seeley Lake area; it was dark and cold in the morning when the student left home and it was dark and cold in the evening when he got home. In some homes the evening meal had been served before he got home

and he ate a warmed-over meal alone.

The boys talked about things they could not do when they rode the bus. Down deep, they wanted to have a chance to be more than students; they wanted to be in athletics. They saw the teachers and the girls make a fuss over the members of the "teams." They felt they had no status because they could not be on a team.

The father in family No. S 8 said:

The boy is being cheated because he can't belong to clubs and things. Our other boy never would have finished high school if he had ridden the bus. Our boy won awards boxing and had 'write-ups' in the paper. That made a difference with the teachers and the kids down there.

The son in family No. S 1 said:

I can't join any clubs when I ride the bus. When I stay in town, I can go to the wrestling club. I like to wrestle and do not like to miss any of the meetings.

The girls like to join clubs, too. The daughter in family No. S 2 felt that she was missing something because she could not join the Pep Club. Her parents were too busy in the fall to take her to Missoula for the football games, and if she were to be a member of the Pep Club, she would be required to attend the games. She tried but had to give up.

Father No. S 2 said:

None of the girls who graduated have ridden the bus for the four years. They have gone two or three years before they had the bus and then

they rode during their senior year. I actually looked that up myself and I know that is right. I can give you complete figures on that for sure. Here is the record as I established it last year, 1960. At present time we have nine children who should be high school Freshmen. Of these nine, six were riding the bus at the time I checked it. Three have either dropped out of school or have moved to a better location for attending school. There were twelve children who should be Sophomores. Five of these were attending school by way of the bus. Last but not least, out of the eleven potential seniors, we didn't have a single child riding the bus.

When this father was asked why he felt that the number of students was so reduced he replied,

I'd say it was all because of the situation, of course, but it's a combination of the children that ordinarily would maintain a C average, we'd say, can't possibly maintain this average and ride the bus.

Mother No. 3 4 said that not one of the first eighth grade graduation class, that of 1956, the year the bus was started for Seeley Lakers, graduated from high school.

Some of the children who had dropped out of Missoula County High School had been sent to another school or the family had moved away in order to be nearer a high school.

A latent function of the school is to keep the teen-ager out of the labor market or off the streets. The lumber industry is a perilous one. The union has a minimum age of eighteen years for working in the saw mills. The risk is too high for the employer of a logging crew to hire boys under nineteen years. The school, also, keeps girls from marrying too early.

Mother No. S 6 said that they had considered sending their girl away to board during her school years because they felt that she would do better in her studies if she were not riding the bus and that the drain on her strength would be diminished.

In family No. S 7 both the mother and daughter felt that dropouts were due to lack of interest and not being able to be in school activities. The mother expressed it this way :

I think it's lack of interest. They don't get into anything in Missoula. They don't like being left out. They don't have the chance to go to the games and clubs and they sort of lose interest.

The daughter said:

You sort of have the feeling that you're left out. You can't join anything. They talk about things and you don't know anything about it because they have gone and you didn't.

Mother No. S 1 said that it cost more to send children away to "board" at school than some families could afford. This family was maintaining a home in Missoula for the grandmother so that the son could stay there when he needed to do reference work at the library or wanted to stay for games or club meetings. This mother told about another family which was maintaining two homes, one in Seeley Lake and one in Missoula, because the daughter's doctor had forbidden her to ride the school bus. Mother No. S 1 commented on the children who miss school due to illness. Such illnesses made an added load for the student as it was difficult to make up work which had been missed.

All three teenage informants in home No. S 10 (old barn) admitted they had dropped out of school. When asked why they had dropped out, they replied, "it wasn't worth it." The boy said that it was too hard and that he got too tired. These teenagers had a hungry look as though they did not get enough to eat or, at least, not enough of the right kind of food. This was the home in which a woman lay perfectly still on an army cot under the window the entire time the interviewer was there. The girl said they got behind in their school work when they were absent and they mentioned that when the weather and roads were bad, the bus did not run so they would miss school. Although it was August, one of these girls had a rag tied around her throat as though she had a sore throat. Another girl claimed she had gotten sick riding the bus. These teenagers said they did not make friends and they did not have any fun going to school. They were not sure they would attend school in Seeley Lake if there were a high school there later.

The woman at the garage said that the boy who boarded with her for one year had moved to another town rather than ride the bus a second year. Another woman in Seeley Lake said that she watched the girls get married so that they would not need to ride the school bus. In family No. S 4 the girl wanted to get married and the mother said that she would not consent until the girl promised to finish high school. This is the one graduate the interviewer

heard about who had ridden the bus and finished, but the people in Seeley Lake said she had not ridden the bus the entire four years.

The woman in family No. S 5 spoke about the girls in family No. S 9. These girls were out of school when the mother was ill. Then they would not go back to school. One of them went to San Diego to be a waitress. This same story was given by the girls themselves. The only reason they were in Seeley Lake during the summer was that they were homesick for the mountains, they said. As soon as one of them earned enough money as a waitress in one of the cafes, she would return to San Diego and send her sister money to join her.

Parents of Seeley Lake school children had eyed the opportunities offered by the Missoula County High School with envy and were determined to get these advantages for their children without having to board the children away from home. In 1956 they were successful in establishing a school bus route from Seeley Lake to Missoula County High School. By 1960, these same parents had learned that these opportunities had not been planned for the child who rides a school bus for more than four hours a day. They realized that distance and the limitations of endurance prevented the student from taking advantage of the opportunities of the consolidated school, the well stocked library, the well trained band director, the capable coaches, the organized clubs, and the social events.

CHAPTER IX

HEALTH AND DISPOSITION OF THE STUDENTS

Much of the problem of grades and dropouts for the Seeley Lake people stemmed from the health and disposition of the pupils. The weariness of the long haul affected both the health and disposition of the pupils. The families worried about the health of the students and the families were the ones who suffered from the cross disposition of the pupils.

Weariness. Every family complained about the pupils getting tired and the pupils themselves commented on how tired they felt. The parents and the other children in the family complained about how cross the pupils who rode the school bus were.

Mother No. S 4 said:

You can see it (the weariness) building up and by Christmas time they're well ready for a vacation. And they sleep a lot. They don't do much homework, my girls especially. I know they don't do as much homework as they should but they need their sleep because they'll just be sick if they don't. They have to be in bed by nine, ten o'clock at the latest.

The daughter in family No. S 5 said:

If a person don't get a little bit of rest, you just wear down, having to stay up doing your studies; you got to get it done; you have to stay up doing it. It kinda wears on your sleep.

Another phase of this tiredness was expressed by the son in this same family:

It was sort of taxing physically and took a lot of time, four hours a day on the bus, but I enjoyed it.

Father No. 52 said:

By the end of the week, by Saturday morning, she'll sleep until ten or eleven o'clock and again on Sunday morning. We try to let her catch up for by the end of the week you can see that she is progressively worse. They're actually mentally tired and they don't get physical exercise. I mean they're just worn out from lack of sleep, book work and so on and so forth. But their physical exercise is actually at a minimum. They ride from here to the bus; they ride the bus to school; they go to classes; they ride the bus home; walk around the house and that's their exercise for the day. It wasn't unusual at all, especially in the Spring and Fall, for Maryanna to catch a horse and ride twelve hours on some Saturday or Sunday or just run and play like a small child would do, just because she felt like it. Lack of physical exercise is all I can explain it. She just had physical energy stored up. And there is no other way to get it. The children in Missoula can walk back and forth to school; going to dances and ball games or something like that and she's riding the bus. Maryanna gained pretty close to twenty-five pounds last winter. That's due to lack of exercise and she's lost twenty-three of it this summer because that was abnormal weight. It's hard to control because of their long hours. She eats breakfast at about a quarter to six in the morning so she eats a hearty breakfast. It's a long way to school. By lunch time it's nearly seven hours since she ate, so I suppose she eats a hearty lunch. By the same token it's seven o'clock before we have supper so she eats a big supper. She's actually hungry from time but hasn't exerted herself to use it up.

Parents in Seeley Lake felt that the frail child just could not stand the grind. Two women whose children were not yet riding

the bus stated they were worried about the time their children will be riding the bus. One mother, bookkeeper at the garage, said:

We are afraid that our boy who has a blood disease won't be able to cut the mustard. We moved from San Francisco to get away from city life, but maybe we moved too far.

The families who lived nearer the school than the Seeley Lakers did not feel that their children were under the same strain as the students from Seeley Lake. The students who lived at McNamara rode 19 miles each way. One mother at McNamara, No. M 13, said:

If she were living in Missoula she would be going to movies and she would be more tired than she is. I think her health is much better than it's ever been.

The son in family No. M 14 said:

I don't get tired riding the bus, but the kids who ride clear to the end of the route get tired. I just ride from Missoula out here.

To a question about his health, he replied:

"I haven't hardly missed any days."

Another boy at McNamara said:

I can't rest on the bus. There is too much noise. The bus is about full when it gets here. I guess those kids can't rest, either. They get pretty tired. Their school work is not satisfactory, either. They get tired out. They ain't absent much.

The mothers at Greenough (33 miles from school) felt that their daughters were as healthy as they would be if they did not

ride the bus. They caught the epidemics which went around but outside of that they were not ill.

Advantages and Disadvantages of a School Bus Route. The families in the Seeley Lake area whose youngsters rode 153 miles each school day felt that the disadvantages far outweighed the advantages of living on a school bus route. The families at Greenough and McNamara took the converse position. They felt disadvantages of living on the school bus route increased proportionally to the distance a family lived from the school.

The long ride, the lack of exercise, the inability to participate in the extracurricular activities of the school in Missoula, the low grades, and the anxieties about the road and the weather were all cited as disadvantages for the school bus riders and families in the Seeley Lake area. Since these same features were not such concrete problems to those who lived nearer to the school, they felt that living in a rural setting had many advantages.

All the parents felt sorry for the pupils who rode the school bus from Seeley Lake. Their effort to get a high school at Seeley Lake was testimony that they were concerned, concerned enough to try something.

The mothers at both Greenough and McNamara felt that rural living had much to offer. A McNamara mother No. M 13, said:

I feel that one of the advantages in living out here is that she can make friends with those she really likes. They can come out here and ride horses or take hikes, and they aren't running the streets. The advantages are greater than the disadvantages as far as her studying goes. I definitely do feel that. There isn't the phone to call up and spend hours on and things like that, like there is in town.

She admitted that her daughter would have been in more clubs and things of that sort if they lived in or nearer to town, but she felt that when the girl was older, she could have her own car and drive into town for the meetings and other activities in the school. This was not feasible for Seeley Lakers.

Mother No. M 14 at McNamara said:

"There's lots for the boys to find to do, fish and hunt in the summer and on weekends." This mother did feel that the number of advantages which the school offered for those who could participate was "wonderful." She felt there were advantages to living in town, too.

Mother No. M 15 at McNamara believed that the rural life was "the life" for boys. She asked:

Have you noticed it ain't the kids in the country that get hurt in car accidents? And there ain't the drunken parties out here. We don't have no trouble with our boys. They are home every night. Not too long after supper they are in bed. We know where they are all the time.

At Greenough, which is 33 miles from the school, the students did not get too tired to enjoy the life they had. Mother No. G 11

said:

This is a good place to live. Sure, the snow gets high as the fence in the winter, but the summers make up for that. My daughter likes horses and she helps the men at the ranch with calving. She wants to be a veterinarian. My husband likes to fish and pan for gold. I wouldn't like to have my girl running around town as the Missoula kids do. We know where our children go and who they are with. And we know everyone here.

Mother No. G 12 said:

It's all advantages living out here. We know all our neighbors. The girls like horses and can help care for them. I can't think of one disadvantage.

School authorities agree that an hour on the school bus is not too long for a child to ride twice a day. This distance does not discourage his parents from taking him to school for special events.

This chapter has supported the theory that a child does not become too tired riding a school bus for sixty minutes or less. It has shown that students on relatively short bus rides do not get too tired physically or mentally to do their homework or to do their work in school; they can stay after school for club meetings and they can become a part of the school culture. Also, they are not too exhausted to enjoy the advantages of rural living.

This chapter has shown that the students from Seeley Lake did become too exhausted to take advantage of the consolidated school. The frustrations caused by not being able to become a part

of the sub-culture of the school were great. Parents and students resented the ethnicity of being a "bus student." During the school year, Seeley Lake school bus riders were too weary to take advantage of rural life.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was undertaken when interest in the school bus route from Seeley Lake, Montana was aroused in the Fall of 1959. Questions concerning the adjustments of students and their families were planned, and a tape-recorder was taken to Seeley Lake to interview the students and families concerned. The interviewer found the families in the Seeley Lake area willing, even anxious, to talk about the school bus route, the adjustments made by the students and their families, and the problems arising from the long haul. An unexpected variable was present in that the problems of the school bus route were being collectively discussed by informants. Apparently the community, under the sponsorship of the Parent Teacher Association, was aspiring for a high school at Seeley Lake. The Fact-Finding Committee of the P.T.A. was recommending that students of the Greenough area be transported by bus to Seeley Lake instead of Missoula County High School.

The students and their parents in Greenough were included in this study due to the proposed change in school sites, which they found distasteful.

McNamara, 19 miles from the Missoula County High School, was selected as a comparative community. A girl and three boys were attending the high school and riding the bus from this community.

SUMMARY

The Seeley Lake school bus route which was started in 1956 was considered by the residents of the area to be the longest school bus route in the United States. The problems were numerous for the driver, the families whose children rode the bus, and for the students themselves.

The route, from the starting point at a little community south of Seeley Lake townsite to Gray's mill, eight miles north of Seeley Lake townsite, and back to Missoula County High School in Missoula, Montana was 76.6 miles. Students boarded the bus at the starting point and continued to join the bus group until the bus arrived at Bonner, Montana, about eight miles outside of the city limits of Missoula. Greenough is 33 miles from Missoula and McNamara is 17 miles from the school.

Seeley Lake is in an area of mountain forest country. The town's principal industries are logging, lumber mills, and recreation. It is a small rural community 65 miles from Missoula, which is the county seat and largest city in Missoula County. Its style of life is essentially rural like that of a "line" village.

In order to give the youth of the rural area the education for adult living which American culture considers necessary, school districts have been abandoning the "little red school house" with a

handfull of pupils and one teacher for the consolidated school. Missoula County High School is not actually a consolidated school, since the district was originally set up on a county wide basis. Students were bused into the high school from the first. Seeley Lakeers were taken into Missoula to high school after the people in Seeley Lake found a driver who owned his bus. It was after this, too, that the people of Seeley Lake area elected a person from the area to serve on the school board for the Missoula County High School. In 1956 the people of Seeley Lake felt that the educational advantages afforded by Missoula County High School far exceeded any disadvantages of the long haul.

However, in the Seeley Lake area the students were away from home for twelve hours each school day. They were not able to participate unencumbered in any of the extracurricular activities of the school such as band, clubs, athletics, or social events. These students had to meet the demands of a school bus schedule. They lived too far from school for the parents to drive in and pick them up after events, as was possible for the parents in the Greenough or McNamara districts, which were much closer to Missoula County High School. The students from Seeley Lake complained that there was no ground for communication with the students in Missoula. Feelings of ethnicity arose because the development of sub-cultures within the school culture were inevitable. Resentment was engendered within the students and their parents in the Seeley Lake area.

The interaction with other students was not as extensive as

might be assumed. There must be stimuli for interaction. Boys felt there was no chance for them to gain status as the prestige went to the members of the "teams." It has been shown in the study that the boy who won awards and some publicity, even outside of school, was noticed by the teachers as well as the pupils. Girls felt that they had no part in the school community since they were not able to attend dances, take part in plays, or participate in social activities on the campus.

The physical strain on the students who rode the 76.6 miles from Seeley Lake was more than some students could endure. Parents worried about the health of their children although it was stated that not many absences were due to ill health. Absences were due to the bus not completing the trip due to road or weather conditions.

The driver did have the confidence of both parents and pupils. He was faithful and dependable. The community of Seeley Lake felt very lucky to have such a driver.

The roads were a source of anxiety to the parents. Winter came early to Seeley Lake country. The roads were snow-packed early in the fall until late in the spring. The snowplows did not open the road until long after the bus had been over the road, actually breaking the trail. Logging trucks were a menace on the slippery roads, also. Besides the snow and ice and logging trucks, there were places in the road where a slipping bus could go off the road, either into the river or into Salmon Lake. There were curves which were hard to negotiate in a snowstorm. Pictures and maps have been

included in this report to illustrate points concerning the road.

It was necessary for the students who rode the bus to take blankets along for extra warmth as they rode frequently for two hours and more in sub-zero weather. This held true for the students who boarded the bus at Greenough, less than half the distance from Seeley Lake to the school. The girls complained about the condition of their clothes when they arrived at school. The parents in Seeley Lake complained about the school regulation that pants, jeans, or frontier pants could not be worn by the girls in the Missoula County High School building. The parents felt that this kind of clothing would be an added protection for the girls.

The hour of rising and breakfast created hardships for some families in the Seeley Lake area as the students had to be ready to board the bus by six o'clock in the morning. This required families to get up at least an hour earlier than they would need to do otherwise. These mainly were not farm families with chores to do. In the evening the families deferred supper until after six o'clock. Under different circumstances they would have eaten at four-thirty or five o'clock when the men got off work at the saw mills. These problems did not bother the families who lived at Greenough and McNamara. They got up no earlier than was necessary for the men in the families to get to work; furthermore, the children were home by five o'clock at which time the families could sit down as a unit for the evening meal.

Complaints were made by parents that there was little time in the day for the bus riders to assist with work around the house. However, one youngster in the Seeley Lake area did have chores which he accomplished before he boarded the bus in the morning and after he arrived home at night.

The mothers in the Seeley Lake area did not feel that their daughters had enough time to spend with them so that the desired relationship between mother and daughter would be established. The mothers believed that they were losing the opportunity for personality influence and social control of their daughters. Mothers resented inordinate influence of the peer group.

The younger children in the Seeley Lake families complained about the little time these students had to spend with them in play. The small children were not out of bed when the older ones left on the bus. Shortly after the students came home it was bedtime for the younger ones.

A rural community must create its own entertainment. Like most rural communities, Seeley Lake is too small for a movie theater. Dancing in the "bars" is not permitted for teenagers, so there is no place for the teenagers to go to have fun. The adults had not mastered the art of organizing leisure-time activities for their children. As a result special effort was made to have parties for the teenagers. The all-purpose room in the elementary school was used for parties which were not open to the public but were for

pupils only. Games and dancing to record-player music were all that could be promoted. Married teenagers were not permitted to attend. There were times when the pupils from Greenough were invited to attend. One of the homes in the area was the scene for the true rural party, where all the family was invited and all went. There were dancing in the big dining room and games for the younger children in other rooms, while the oldsters contentedly sat in front of the immense fireplace in the large living room.

The tenets of the United States contain the belief that a pupil has a right to have extra help from a teacher when he needs it. Missoula County High School has better trained teachers than is commonly the case in the "little red school house;" in addition, the teachers are required to stay after school so that the pupils can seek help. Yet, the bus rider cannot stay after school for this aid. There is very little or no time between the dismissal of the last class and the departure of the bus for the student to do more than prepare to ride for more than two hours before getting home. It was too far for the parents of Seeley Lake to drive into town so that they could transport the pupil home after consultation with the teacher. This resulted in resentment by the parents.

Complaints were made about lack of time for reference work. Reference materials were unavailable for the student who rode the bus. It was hard to get all the information needed during the

one allotted library period. Informants stated that reference books could not be taken home at night. Some of the parents stated that a parent must be present to sign out books for bus riders.

The cadet-teachers commented on the lack of time between classes and bus departures. Students who rode the buses could not be kept after school as a means of disciplining them when they were unruly or when they did not have their work done.

Complaints about poor grades were made. The reasons given for this were weariness of the student, the unavailability of reference books, the lack of time for teacher assistance, the insufficient time for home study. The pupils in Greenough and McNamara claimed that they were on the honor roll nearly every semester as they were not so tired. They had supper at five o'clock, permitting them a longer study time in the evening.

Dropouts worried the parents. Dropouts are more common among rural children than city children. Industry does not want the "dropout." The immature laborer is a liability.

The health of the pupils concerns the parents. To the question, "Do you keep your child home when he gets up feeling slightly under the weather or do you send him on the bus hoping he will get better, not worse, as the day progresses?", the answer was, "They usually go."

There are some pupils in the eighth grade who had been told

that their health would not permit them to ride the bus. Their families will be forced to maintain two homes, one for the father in Seeley Lake where he had a good job and one for the mother and children in some town where there was a high school.

Parents whose children had not yet started to ride the bus were distressed that their children would not be able to take the hardship of riding the bus when it was time for them to do so.

As the year progressed the children who rode the bus became cross and hard to live with. This was a complaint voiced by families in the Seeley Lake area. A "cross" disposition was not one of the problems for parents of the Greenough and McNamara children.

The parents in the Seeley Lake area felt that their children gained no advantages in living so far from the high school. In contrast, parents in the Greenough and McNamara areas felt that there were no disadvantages to living in the rural area.

CONCLUSION

In gathering and studying the answers to the questions asked in the first chapter, much was learned about the adjustments which families and students made to the demands of the school bus. In all fairness, it cannot be said that the questions were answered dispassionately. The fact that the community under study was united under the stress of intense desire for a high school in that community meant that answers would be slanted in favor of their objective.

However, the writer feels that there are adjustments made by the student and family and a bus route of such long length does put an undue strain on a student. The advantages of a consolidated school are nullified by the problems of the long haul.

There were many questions which this study has suggested for further consideration. Among these are:

1. Does the consolidated school really give the student all the benefits claimed?
2. Does the percentage of "dropouts" increase in direct ratio to the length of the school bus route?
3. Is there a basis for comparison of grades of rural and urban students?
4. Would the same adjustments be made by families and students on other long school bus routes?
5. Does the same cultural conflict - rural culture versus urban culture - exist when the distance between homesite and school

is much shorter than the Seeley Lake school bus route?

6. Is there the same feeling of social distance between bus riders and other students when the school bus route is shorter?

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